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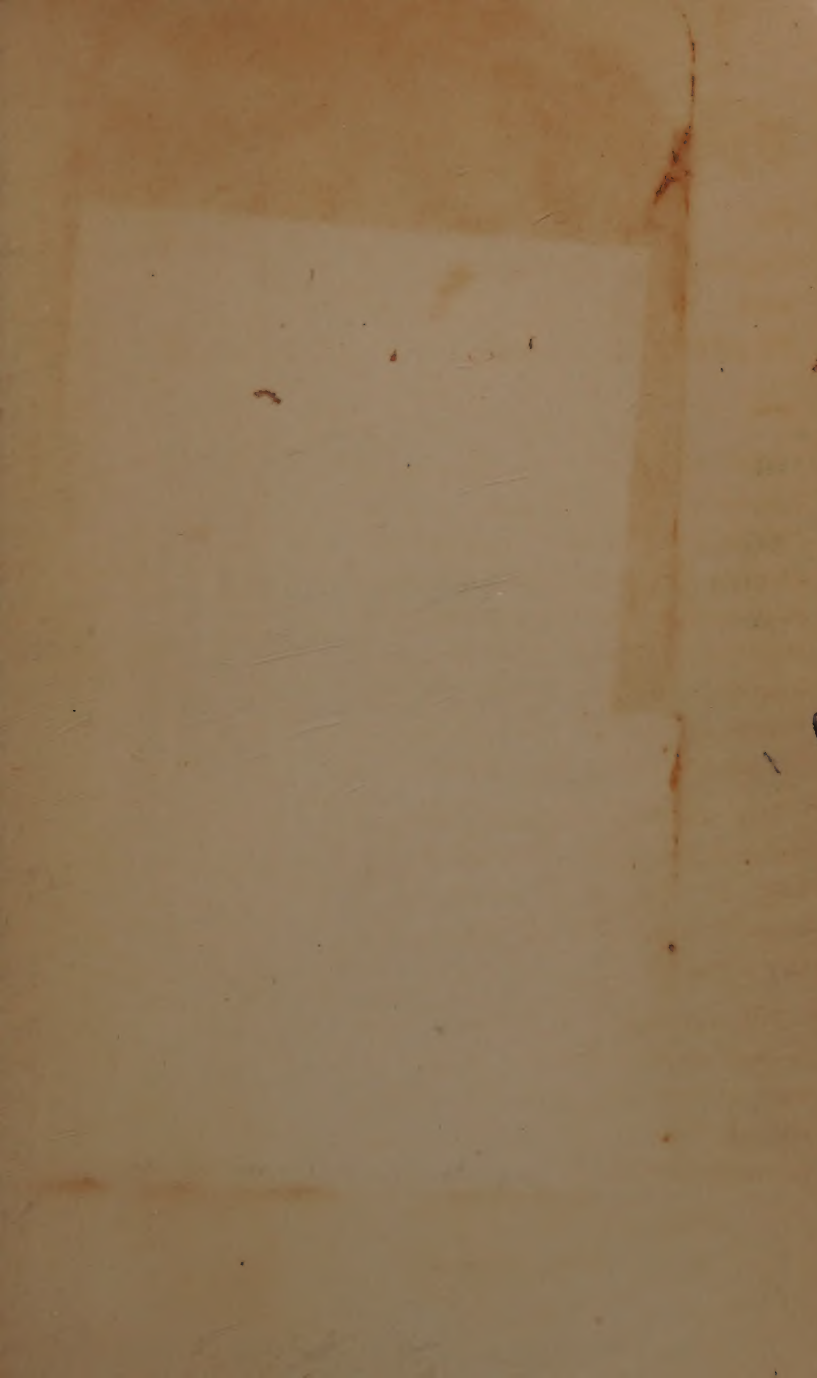
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SPREAD EAGLE

SPREAD EAGLE

A DRAMA AND A FICTION
FOR PATRIOTS

BY
GEORGE S. BROOKS
AND
WALTER B. LISTER

WITH A FOREWORD BY
JOHN ANDERSON

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NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1927

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**SPREAD EAGLE
IS DEDICATED
TO
JED HARRIS
WHO PRODUCED IT**

Grateful acknowledgment is made to George Abbott,
who not only directed the production but contributed
a masterly revision and development of the original
manuscript.

PREFACE

Somewhere in nearly every play there is a line, a noise, or often in great ones a silence, which seems to say everything in one instant of drama. It may not be the theatrical climax, but it is, assuredly, the crux of its thought, or the suspended gesture of its whole attitude.

Perhaps it is Aubrey Piper's laugh, the click of the lock as Nora goes out into the night, a gun from the U. S. S. *Olympic*, or merely Belasco hoofbeats as the inevitable happy-ending comes clattering down to the last-act curtain.

"Spread Eagle" has an almost unprintable sound for the point and thrust of its whole mockery. It doesn't, in fact, appear phonetically in the script at all, and the authors have described it somewhat lamely, considering the grandeur of its effect, as a disdainful grunt. It is more than that. It is the essence of all the everlasting and complete comeback rejoinders. It is the sound of sticking the tongue out. It is, in brief, "Mblyah."

Riordan makes it in Act II as he flees the Mexicans,—makes it with all the commonness of common sense in the face of the snooty and foolish sacrifice of young Parkman.

"I suppose you understand, Riordan," says

Parkman, "that it will be necessary for me to report your desertion to Mr. Henderson."

With a horde of cutthroats coming over the back fence, and vainglorious idiots astride the stage as heroes, Mr. Riordan discovers that there is no human word in good or bad standing suitable for the occasion. His substitute is beyond speech. It is a primitive, unkempt, but unmistakable noise. It is as prehistoric as fighting and as up to the minute as "Spread Eagle." Both of them say the same thing; both of them are unanswerable.

It is important that this is said, fortunate that it is said so vehemently, and almost miraculous that, in addition to this, the authors should make of the theme a drama that is as entertaining as it is pungent.

If it were as easy to incite peace as it is war "Spread Eagle" would be an international disarmament conference. There is the impact of sanity behind it, and the sting of mordant humor—two deadly weapons, fatal to the pomposity of war lords. It suggests that a nation parading around with a chip on its shoulder is faintly funny, and ought to be laughed at, and, more than that, it suspects that big business might find it profitable to furnish the chips.

Specifically it shows the head of a great corporation buying a tailor-made revolution in Mexico and tricking the son of a former president of

the United States into the path of the rebellion. Out of the supposed death of the American princeling the Wall Street Mars knows that the Washington Government can be trapped into war, backed up by an hysterical mobilization. Since his mine interests are thus officially protected he can readily afford to be Chairman of the Committee on National Defense at a dollar a year, and "Spread Eagle" achieves the climax of blistering irony in the public sainthood of an unspeakable traitor.

It is beside the point that this may be true, and it is said that some of the dialogue of Act I is an almost verbatim report of an actual conversation. The force and validity of the play lie in the fact that it could be true.

Here is a sudden revealment of future war at its possible source. "What Price Glory" stripped soldiering of its theatrical glamour, and peeked ruinously behind the recruiting slogans. "Spread Eagle" begins just ahead of the ultimatums, and gets in its word before things are told to the marines.

Therein is its special and peculiar weight, and incidentally much of its dramatic appeal. For it recognizes that there are forces at large in a commercial world before which the emperors are powerless, and to which boundaries are merely convenient tight-ropes for generals to fall over.

Obviously a corporation may buy a diplomatic crisis as readily as other raw materials, and for a decent sum an actual *casus belli*, in good working condition, and equipped with self-starting front pages, can be had over the counter.

There may never have been such a war; certainly there never could be if "Spread Eagle" were shown first in all the armories of the world, on the eve of battle, and the fighters made certain that they were not out to kill each other merely for a first mortgage, or somebody's semi-annual dividend.

In the cool, ruthless, and tremendously effective manipulation of this story there is a searching use of fresh material in the theatre. Our stage has been naïve about politics, disdainful to the point of ignorance, of the ways of government.

To it the sheriffs and the senators, ward heelers, and diplomats, are stuffed shirts, obviously labelled, and needed by the dramatists only for such routine purposes as leading last-act posses, fathering tearful, but vocal, ingénues in musical comedies, and rushing in with the necessary papers at important moments. Like the voters themselves, our playwrights have confused politics with politicians, proceeding dangerously from the particular to the general. It has been the salvation of many an election, and the stupidity of nearly every drama dealing with the subject.

Inevitably, perhaps, the current wave of journalism in the theatre was to change all that, was to pry behind the smoke screen of political cigars and discover the rulers in the business of ruling. Reporters turned dramatist leave the mandarins bereft of their last hope—that those who run, can't read.

"Spread Eagle" is of that incorrigible breed. It blurts out in meeting, and it does so with calm savagery. It says such meaty and provocative things, says them so lustily and so unmincingly that it would, perforce, be a shining mark for any censor, since censorship for morality might reasonably include political expediency, on the inescapable conclusion that once there is a censor morality becomes what he says it is.

"Spread Eagle" hoots down the jingoes, and to them that is, of course, immoral. But it captures a broader and a decenter thing, for it is not, I think, wholly pacifist. Out of its own vigor comes the implication that war is foolish, stupid, wasteful, and inept, but, if honestly come by, honestly fought.

Somewhere in its hot scorn and blasting anger there seems to be a remote compassion, a sort of vague salute to the thing which, gallant or ridiculous, but anyway tragical, makes men fight.

It is as if the play is large enough to see this lurking danger, this somehow magnificent weak-

ness, and to ask people to protect themselves from it—even at the superhuman risk of peace.

JOHN ANDERSON.

NEW YORK, April, 1927.

SPREAD EAGLE

SPREAD EAGLE

As Presented by Jed Harris at the Martin Beck Theatre,
New York City, on April 4, 1927.

Staged by George Abbott

Settings by Norman Bel-Geddes

THE CAST

(Named in the order of their appearance)

GRACE.....	Virginia Farmer
PETER.....	Lester Nielson
JOE COBB.....	Osgood Perkins
BILL DAVIS.....	Charles D. Brown
LOIS HENDERSON.....	Brenda Bond
GENERAL RAMON ANGEL DE CASTRO..	Felix Krembs
MARTIN HENDERSON.....	Fritz Williams
CHARLES PARKMAN.....	Allen Vincent
MIKE RIORDAN.....	Donald Meek
ROSALIE KENT.....	Aline MacMahon
MANUEL.....	Eduardo Sanchez
FATHER ESTRELLA.....	Malcolm Duncan
CAPTAIN.....	Herbert Courtney
COLONEL ROJAS.....	Jose Rivas
THEATRE MANAGER.....	Frank E. Dae
RADIO ANNOUNCER.....	Vincent Yorke
BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAGNER, U.S.A..	Fred House
SENTRY.....	Harry M. Cooke
<i>Mexican Officers, Soldiers, Peons, American Officers and Soldiers, etc.</i>	

Note: In the original presentation, there was only one intermission, that between Acts I and II. The second, third, and fourth Scenes of the Second Act were made to bridge the action between the murder of Rosalie and the arrival of Martin Henderson at the U. S. Army base at Matamoras.

ACT ONE

SPREAD EAGLE

ACT ONE

MARTIN HENDERSON's *office, at 120 Broadway*, is quite a delightful place on a June morning. It is furnished luxuriously; not with the staid magnificence of an office like Judge Gary's or J. P. Morgan's, but in the less ornate and more expensive fashion that came to Wall Street with the profits from the War Babies.

It is a huge, panelled room, hidden behind an entire floor of reception halls and outer offices. The panelling is much like that in the Bankers' Club, just above it, in the same building.

On the left of the room are curtained windows that overlook the harbor. The curtains, of dark blue and gold, match the thick blue rug on the floor. Below the windows are radiators, covered to make seats.

HENDERSON's desk, a mammoth piece of shining mahogany, is backed to the window, so that he can swing around in his leather-covered desk chair and watch the commerce of the world pass the Battery and crawl up the Hudson River. JOE COBB's desk, an equally plutocratic piece of furniture, is on the right. Between them is the door that leads to the outer offices and eventually to the ele-

vators. On both desks are a bewildering array of extension phones and push buttons.

The other chairs and the davenport found in the room are all overstuffed, tapestry-covered furnishings, impressive in their quiet way. On the right of the room is a door that leads to a corporation directors' room.

There are no pictures on the walls. When the center door is opened, one may catch a glimpse of an outer office with secretaries' desks beyond.

As the curtain rises, one hears a military band which is playing the Madelon in the street, some thirty stories below. It is diffused and indistinct, like all street sounds which have risen to that height.

GRACE, JOE COBB's secretary, is standing at the open window, listening to the band. She is the very incarnation of modern business efficiency; her dark suit, her precise speech, her rimless nose glasses, the mass of papers in her hand all marking her as one of those angular, unidentified goddesses of commerce who remember contract clauses and luncheon engagements for their employers with equal facility.

PETER, the head office boy, comes in the center door. He is a slight, blond youth, who is supercilious when he dares to be and courteous when he does not. One of GRACE's duties is keeping PETER up to a certain level of conduct which never

satisfies her and which continually antagonizes him.

PETER. Your phone's ringin'.

GRACE. Thanks. I'll take it in here. (*She picks up the phone on HENDERSON's desk.*) Emma. Let me have that call.

PETER. What'm I goin' to tell those people in the reception room?

GRACE. (*Covering the mouthpiece of the phone.*) Go back and tell them that Mr. Henderson hasn't returned from Washington. And that Mr. Cobb hasn't come down.

PETER. Well, General de Castro's out there, for one.

GRACE. (*Speaking into the phone.*) May I take the message for Mr. Cobb? I'm Mr. Cobb's secretary. He's not in yet.

PETER. Mr. Roberts of the Spread Eagle is out there.

GRACE. (*Covering the mouthpiece of the phone.*) Which Roberts?

PETER. "W. T."

GRACE. (*Speaking into the phone.*) I suggested that you might leave your number and I'll— (*To PETER, covering mouthpiece.*) Which is he? There are two Roberts in the Spread Eagle. One's General Manager and the other's Treasurer.

PETER. I don't know.

GRACE. Look it up. (*As PETER shakes his head.*) It'll be on the Directors' list. (*Into phone.*) If you'll leave your number, I'll have Mr. Cobb call. (*She makes a gesture of impatience.*) I'm sure I don't know, sir. Mr. Cobb will have to answer that.

PETER. (*Going through an unlocked drawer in HENDERSON'S desk.*) W. T.'s General Manager.

GRACE. Ask him what he wants.

PETER. Oh, he's got a mine boss with him. Somebody Mr. Henderson sent for.

GRACE. Why didn't you say so? (*Speaking into the phone.*) Yes, sir. I hear you. But Mr. Cobb will have to give you that information. (*To PETER, covering mouthpiece.*) Tell Mr. Roberts to go back, but have the mine boss wait. (*PETER goes. She speaks into the phone.*) I'm afraid it's out of the question. Mr. Henderson never sees anyone except on Mr. Cobb's appointment— No, sir. Mr. Cobb does not permit me— No, I did not say that. No, sir. Why, I couldn't have said that because any such order would have to come from Mr. Henderson or Mr. Cobb——

(*PETER enters, holding the door open for JOE.*)

PETER. Here's Mr. Cobb.

GRACE. (*Speaking into the phone as she looks up and sees JOE.*) Wait a minute—Mr. Cobb's just come. (*She covers mouthpiece.*)

(Enter JOE COBB. *He is a lean, hard-faced, sardonic Yankee, about thirty or thirty-five, well dressed, capable.*)

GRACE. He's asking us about that Waterbury Machinery deal.

JOE. (*As he hands hat to PETER he picks up the phone.*) Yes. I know who you are. I know. I know. You needn't shout. . . . Yes. And my secretary told you that? (*GRACE is startled and worried. PETER stands in the doorway, hoping to hear JOE reprimand GRACE.*) Oh, she did? Well. Well. (*With slow sarcasm.*) That's strange. Thanks for telling me. (*Covers phone and speaks to GRACE.*) Cut in on my extension. Get this. (*GRACE goes to phone on JOE's desk. She seizes her shorthand book and listens in on an extension phone, recording the conversation.*) What's that? Say that again. (*GRACE nods that she has caught it.*) Oh. Oh. You will. . . . Yes? . . . We have a claims department to handle such matters. And our legal department wouldn't earn its fees if we didn't have a suit once in a while, would it? Yes. . . . We've been sued before. (*He grins.*) Oh. . . . So that's it? I'm no lawyer, but my advice to you would be to sue the company to which you delivered the material. . . . (*Grins.*) That looks like carelessness in your shipping department to me. However, you might try this. Take a list of our companies—you'll

find them on our stationery . . . and say eeney-meeney-miney-mo . . . that's as good a way as any. . . . Good-bye. (*Hangs up phone.*) What's the band?

GRACE. Oh, that's the American Legion, Mr. Cobb—you know, the drive for wounded vets.

JOE. Put a memorandum of that conversation on Mr. Henderson's desk. Any word from Mr. Henderson?

GRACE. He wired. He'll be in before lunch. General de Castro's waiting.

JOE. Take this. (*GRACE opens shorthand book. JOE unlocks drawer of his desk and takes out a leather, loose-leaf code book.*) Cable. Rush. To Fielson, F-I-E-L-S-O-N. Strangers Club, Rio. Delay imperative in (*consults code*) put in this word "Quillock." Q-U-I-L-L-O-C-K. Withdraw Mexico offer. Now add T-I-N-G-T-I-V-E. Signed, Cobb. Read that.

GRACE. (*Reading her notes.*) To Fielson, Strangers Club, Rio de Janeiro. Delay imperative in QUILLOCK. Withdraw Mexico offer. T-I-N-G-T-I-V-E. Stop. Cobb. New York.

JOE. (*Sorting the pile of cards on his desk.*) (*First card.*) Next week. (*GRACE notes his comment on back of each card.*) Talk to him. (*Second card.*) Find out what he wants and write a memorandum. (*Third card.*) After we see General de Castro. (*Fourth card.*) Let T. C. talk with him. (*Fifth card.*) Who's this?

GRACE. A newspaper man.

JOE. (*Laying card on table.*) Public Relations Department.

GRACE. He said he was a personal friend.

JOE. Yeah?

GRACE. That's what he said. He said he was in the army with you—said to tell you "Sergeant Davis."

JOE. For the love of God— Oh, sure. The son of a gun. I gotta talk with him. (*Pause.*) Tell you what—shoot him along in before the boss gets here or I'll never get a chance. Let the rest of this junk wait.

GRACE. Yes, Mr. Cobb.

JOE. Do you remember if we had a stop on that G. M. common?

GRACE. Yes, sir. That was Mr. Henderson's memorandum to the broker. I typed it myself.

JOE. Phone over and countermand it. (*Exit GRACE, center.*) (*At phone.*) Get me the Mex. S. and R. secretary. No. The corporation secretary. Hello. Hello. Mr. Cobb speaking. Your executive meeting is postponed until next week. . . . Notify the members. What's that? . . . Well, I'm notifying you. . . . No. I can't help it. Mr. Henderson's been delayed. No. No. Because we have the H. and M. directors at two o'clock, and their construction engineer has come up from Mexico City for the meeting . . . that's the way it is.

(Enter GRACE, bringing in DAVIS. DAVIS is a barely prosperous, intelligent, slightly bald newspaper man of thirty-five. Exit GRACE.)

JOE. (Hangs up phone.) Sergeant Davis. (Rises to shake hands.) Ha-ha-ha. Well, baby, how are you?

DAVIS. Hello, Joe, you damned old millionaire. My God. You don't look so different. Where's your high hat?

JOE. Glad to see you, Bill.

DAVIS. Well, I'm glad to see you, too. Never thought anybody in my section would be sittin' on top of the world like this. Corporal Cobb—the big business man. How are you, fella?

JOE. Sit down, Bill.

DAVIS. So this is Wall Street?

JOE. Sure. What can I sell you?

DAVIS. Well, from what I hear of this outfit, Joe, you can sell me anything you got. You slum-grabbing bond-holder.

JOE. My girl tells me you're in the newspaper game now.

DAVIS. Yeah. I was on the paper up home for a while. Last three years I been in New York, but I didn't know you were in town till day before yesterday. I met Lefty Thompson. He told me what had happened to you.

JOE. Old Lefty, eh? God! Hasn't he changed?

DAVIS. It's his wife.

JOE. (*Sympathetically.*) How many wives you got?

DAVIS. Yeah, I'm in harness, but she's all right, Joe. You know what I mean. We get along fine. I got a boy five years old.

JOE. No.

DAVIS. Wait. I think maybe I got a picture.

(*He pulls photo from pocket, hands it to JOE.*)

Got some better ones at home. Sun was kind of in his eyes.

JOE. Nice-looking kid.

DAVIS. Yeah. Looks like his mother. How about you, Joe? Still single?

JOE. Well, practically so.

DAVIS. That's better than being like Lefty. Well, we got to talking over old times. And you, being the brightest boy in the class, naturally you come in for a lot of dirty cracks . . . but I says to myself, this is duck soup for me. I'll just go up and weep on old Joe's shoulder and see if he can fix me up an interview with Henderson on the strained relations with our Southern neighbor, or something like that, see?

JOE. Cigarette?

DAVIS. Lefty tells me you're a great guy. He says you got a ring in Henderson's nose and lead him around like the prize bull at the county fair.

JOE. Didn't you know that, Bill?

DAVIS. No. On the level. Lefty says you're the brains of Henderson's companies. But I said to myself, "This don't seem right, some way." Here's a guy I've taken at craps and red dog and poker every pay day.

JOE. And how——

DAVIS. And the next thing I know, he's top kicker in one of the biggest corporations in the whole U. S. while I'm hustling finance on a lousy newspaper.

(They laugh.)

JOE. So I'm the top-kicker, eh?

DAVIS. That's how I heard it.

(Outside the music is louder.)

JOE. No, Bill. Of course I don't object to the rumor, but I gotta admit Henderson was in business long before he found me . . . and doing pretty well at it.

DAVIS. Well, I figured if anybody could get me this interview, you could. What's your title, anyhow?

JOE. I'm Henderson's alibi—huh—that's right. Whatever he does that he don't want to admit he's done—I'm it, and if I ever make any jack, I'll hire a guy to do it for me. For instance (*humorously*), if he ever got in a jam with a woman—I'd be the one who'd have to marry the girl. (*JOE jerks his thumb toward the window as the sound of the band playing Madelon is heard more*

plainly.) Well, there's the boys who gave Henderson his start.

DAVIS. Huh? How do you mean? Oh, yeah. I guess he did make a lot of money in the war. (*He saunters over to the window.*)

JOE. Plenty.

DAVIS. God! A band stirs me up.

JOE. Sure it does. That's what bands are for. (*Like a drill sergeant in cadence with the music.*)

Hutt-two. Hutt-two. Hutt-two. They couldn't make an army without a band. Nine years ago, Bill. All us damned fools marchin' away. Hutt-two. Hutt-two. Head up. Chin in. Thinkin' we were patriots. Marchin' away to make money for somebody.

DAVIS. There's something in that, Joe. A lot of us guys think we were pretty smart, eh? And we got caught by a band.

JOE. (*As the music dies away.*) But the band don't play when you're doin' kitchen police. And they leave the band behind, when you're laying on your belly in the mud— It's all a great bunch of hokum from the ribbons to the gold stars. Say, there are five women in my town who are wearin' gold stars and it would kill 'em if they knew how their boys died.

DAVIS. Sure. I guess it's mostly hokum. But what ain't? An', honest, Joe, did anything ever give you a bigger kick? When you enlisted, didn't

your mother cry and your father slap you on the back and your girl kiss you? If it hadn't been for the war, you would never have had the chance to kid yourself into thinking you were a hero.

JOE. Are you press agent for the Marines?

DAVIS. (*Laughing.*) Oh, you may lose a leg or two, but wasn't our first party in Paris worth it?

JOE. That party wasn't a circumstance to some the boys around here threw, while we were away. Besides, I want to stay in a country where prophylaxis means toothbrush and nothing else.

DAVIS. You said it.

JOE. The other day, Chief Justice Taft was upstairs at the Bankers' Club. He was speaking for world peace and talking about the crime of war. Henderson stopped him and said, "That's all very true, sir. Very true. But no matter what you say about war, it certainly does help business."

DAVIS. And he knows.

JOE. Oh, lots of them know but they won't tell. (*As he talks he signs the letters on his desk.*) Remember those water-proof coats that the company clerks used for blotting paper? (DAVIS *nods.*) One of Henderson's companies made forty cents apiece on them. Remember those lousy wrap-leggings that dissolved in the mud?

DAVIS. (*Nodding.*) I ought to.

JOE. This outfit made them, too. And those hundred-and-fifty-fives. The high-explosive shells. Every time one of them went off it rang up seventeen and one-half cents in Henderson's cash register. You see, it took only a few minutes' barrage in a small sector to furnish this office. Fourteen companies we had, all controlled by one man. I call 'em Henderson's fourteen points.

DAVIS. Well, kid, it certainly does me good to know that we both did our bit for Henderson.

JOE. Oh, he made sacrifices, too. Nobody can say that he wasn't patriotic. He never thought he was better than the poorest citizen. Why, Bill, all through the war he never served white bread on his table. Not once. And he kept all the wheatless days and meatless days and gasolineless Sundays. And he worked for the government for a dollar a year.

DAVIS. Ain't it a shame?

JOE. No, it ain't, Bill. The public's a sap. In the next war some of the younger generation can take my place as a machine-gun corporal at thirty-nine dollars a month. I'll invest my money with Henderson and work for a dollar a year.

DAVIS. I don't know, Joe. When the flags begin to fly, I'd hate to trust you.

JOE. All bunk, Bill. I'm a realist now. I guess the old army put me on my feet at that. After I was turned loose, it suddenly came to me

that the ways of my fathers was apple-sauce. You know the kind of folks I come from—tight-fisted little Vermont farmers, the most sentimental damn fools in the world.

DAVIS. (*Doubtfully.*) Yankees? Sentimental? I didn't hear it that way, Joe.

JOE. You can believe it, they are. I remember one time my old man—(*he is interrupted by the ringing of the phone*)—there was a bad potato crop—prices went way up—(*answering the phone*). Hello. The General? No. Don't let him go. Walk him around—show him the parade—keep him there. Well, the old man had a lot of spuds. (*Hangs up and continues as if there had been no interruption.*) But instead of taking the best price offered (*phone rings*) he says "the natural and right price for spuds was fifty cents a bushel." (*Takes off receiver.*) And, by God, that's all he'd take for them. . . . (*Into phone.*) Yes? Swearing? I don't know. You shouldn't listen. Well, Lois, your father isn't in yet. No. No, he didn't say anything. Sure, if you're down this way, come along. . . . All right. (*Hangs up phone.*) Now if that ain't sentiment, what in hell would you call it? It's just dressed up different, that's all.

DAVIS. Joe (*rising*), I'm takin' up a hell of a awful lot of your time.

JOE. Sit down.

DAVIS. No. I won't do it. Just give me the straight slant on this interview, will you?

JOE. I'm sorry, Bill. Henderson never talks much.

DAVIS. He don't have to talk—just let me have one minute with him, and I'll write a story that won't do a bit of harm—just let me use his name.

JOE. (*Shaking his head, regretfully.*) Sorry.

DAVIS. He could just give me his views on the Mexican trouble—and Henderson isn't one of those space-grabbers who's been interviewed to death. . . . I thought he might like to say what he thinks.

JOE. Henderson won't talk. And if he would, I wouldn't let him. Go see Judge Gary. He likes to give interviews. (*Phone rings.*) (*Into phone.*) Tell her to come in. (*To DAVIS.*) Get me straight, old man. I'll do anything I can for you. Give you anything we got . . . except news. We're all out of news here and we always will be. Have lunch with me some day next week . . . and I'll . . . well, I'll give you dessert and everything.

DAVIS. (*Rising to leave.*) Well, I'll do that, kid—I sure will.

JOE. I'll call you. (*Enter LOIS HENDERSON.*) Come in, Lois. (*To DAVIS.*) Give my secretary your number, will you, Bill?

(LOIS HENDERSON *is about twenty, pretty, vivacious, spoiled; the product of an indulgent father and the Misses Masters' School.*)

DAVIS. All right, Joe.

JOE. We'll have a good talk.

DAVIS. Check, Joe. So long.

JOE. So long. (*Exit DAVIS, center.*) (*After door is shut.*) Hello, Lois.

LOIS. Hello. (*She stands just inside the door—they are looking at each other with more absorption than is necessary for the casual meeting. Finally he turns away as though embarrassed.*)

JOE. Sit down. (*She advances—he looks at her again.*)

LOIS. Why not? All right if I read father's mail? (*She goes to HENDERSON'S desk.*)

JOE. Use your judgment.

LOIS. I suppose you're all kinds of busy.

JOE. Not so very. We wait for the boss to come to get really busy.

LOIS. Is his train late?

JOE. (*With faint sarcasm.*) Would his train dare be late?

LOIS. (*Trying out one of her best smiles.*) You stop making fun of my sweet old father.

JOE. (*Apparently unscathed.*) I will not. I'll do lots of things for you, but not that.

LOIS. (*Beginning to get down to business.*) What would you do for me?

JOE. (*Reflectively.*) For the boss's daughter——

LOIS. No, for me.

JOE. I'd waste time right in the middle of a good business day talking to you, telling you nice things about yourself.

LOIS. You haven't told them.

JOE. I was thinking them.

LOIS. What?

JOE. Well, I was thinking how wrong a person can be. Since you've grown up, the last few—the last—well, recently, I have to take back all the remarks I used to make about your being such a homely little brat.

LOIS. Yes?

JOE. Because I have to admit you're getting prettier every day. Just my observation, nothing personal.

LOIS. Of course you'd have to spoil it. If this were a visit, I would walk right out on you—but I'm not just wasting time to-day—I have business—I've brought the President's son to see father.

JOE. President of what?

LOIS. Only the United States, that's all—or I really mean ex-President. Charles Parkman.

JOE. Young Parkman, eh? Is he a friend of yours?

LOIS. (*With an air.*) Of course.

JOE. He wants a job, I suppose. Is that it?

LOIS. Wants a job? My goodness, I guess he won't have to want long. I guess most any firm would be crazy to get him, if they knew about it. I happened to hear, so I thought I'd get him for our company.

JOE. (*Not registering enthusiasm.*) That's fine.

LOIS. He's awfully nice, Joe. Terribly nice. He's the most wonderful dancer I almost ever knew.

JOE. The Board of Directors will be tickled to death.

LOIS. (*Resenting flippancy.*) You know what I mean.

JOE. How is he on arithmetic?

LOIS. If you're always so cynical, how do you expect people to like you?

JOE. (*Quite frankly.*) I don't.

LOIS. You could be simply—(*searching for a word*) magnificent, if you'd let yourself. (*She pokes at the blotter for a moment and then continues with great self-assurance.*) I'd like the job of making a human being out of you.

JOE. (*Slowly.*) Yeah? Where would you begin on a job like that?

LOIS. I'd make you go to parties when you come out to the club; for instance, I'd keep you out of the bar and on the dance floor.

JOE. I don't dance.

LOIS. You mean you don't like to.

JOE. I don't know how.

LOIS. But, I mean I should think you would have learned.

JOE. No, it looks too foolish. (*Casually.*) Not that I wouldn't like a good excuse to put my arms around you——

LOIS. Am I so formidable?

JOE. What?

LOIS. Do you need an excuse? Well, never mind, go ahead—what were you saying? I thought you liked music.

JOE. I like music, but just take a good look at a lot of folks dancing sometime—it's silly—it's ridiculous. So that's out. I won't do that and I won't lead your dog—is there anything else you can do to educate me?

LOIS. (*In a serious mood.*) Did it ever occur to you that conversation was intended to make friends—not to make people afraid of you?

JOE. Now I get what you mean. Those magazine ads—"He didn't know what to say, but he learned in ten easy lessons——"

LOIS. You're the most impossible lunatic. Do you know you scare my friends to death? They think you're about father's age and the rudest thing in captivity.

JOE. That's good for business. It inspires confidence. Now these good dancers get into

business—they're too polite—some of them. However, we'll give Mr. Parkman the benefit of the doubt.

LOIS. I know he'll try very hard. Now, here's a note for him if I don't get back on time. I have to run to catch the *Berengaria* before she sails.

(JOE puts the note on his desk.)

JOE. Some other president's son leaving for Europe?

LOIS. No. A mere banker's daughter.

JOE. Confine your attentions to daughters until I learn to dance, will you?

LOIS. (*Coming back and leaning on desk with new enthusiasm.*) Why don't you?

JOE. What?

LOIS. Learn to dance and everything. Take me some place.

JOE. I might fall in love with you.

LOIS. Not the slightest danger of that. (*Turns to him.*) Bet you never fell in love with anybody, did you?

JOE. I've been groggy a couple of times, but never really knocked. But I'm tough—not a tender young thing like you—you must have taken the count dozens of times.

LOIS. Nope. Once about three years ago I suppose I might have, but my aunt was refereeing, so the bout was called.

JOE. That's all right, but I want to warn you, somebody's liable to slip over a fast one. What I mean is, watch yourself in the clinches.

LOIS. (*Laughs.*) The in-fighting—I know—(*Phone rings.*)

JOE. (*Looking at phone, bored.*) Just as I was getting interested in the battle. (*Answering.*) Yeah? No. Keep him there. Mr. Henderson will want to see him. But don't say so—make it interesting for him. Show him how far it is to the sidewalk. All right—all right—listen—bring him in here, I'll take care of him. (*Hangs up.*) I've got to lock up a certain General de Castro until your father——

LOIS. I know him. General de Castro. Father had him out to dinner.

JOE. (*Scowling his disapproval.*) He did? I don't think that was——

(*PETER opens the door.*)

PETER. Yes, sir——

JOE. (*Motions LOIS away.*) Just step back—you better not be seen——

(*LOIS goes to the window, right. Enter PETER.*)

PETER. General de Castro.

(*Enter GENERAL DE CASTRO. Exit PETER.*)

(*RAMON ANGEL DE CASTRO, urbane, well-dressed man-of-the-world, is a powerful*

man, both physically and mentally. He is, in his business life, a bandit of the Pancho Villa type. His ancestry is Spanish-Indian-Mexican. He is much more suave than the conventional stage bandit. He is about forty or forty-five.)

JOE. How are you, General?

GENERAL. I have wait one hour.

JOE. We're anxious for this interview, too—
But Mr. Henderson was delayed——

GENERAL. You have made appointment for ten o'clock——

JOE. Mr. Henderson will see you without fail.
(*Opens door to directors' room.*) You can wait in here.

GENERAL. I have said to you. I am tired of waiting— Now, when Señor Henderson do not come——

JOE. I'm telling you— He'll be here in a minute. Make yourself comfortable——

(*Exit GENERAL. JOE closes door.*)

LOIS. I don't believe that Generals mean much in your life.

JOE. If I let him join this conversation then I'd be out of luck, wouldn't I?

LOIS. Oh, would you?

(*Phone on JOE's desk rings.*)

JOE. The General is a— (*Takes receiver.*)

Yes, all right. (*Hangs up after pause.*) Mr. Parkman's in the reception-room——

LOIS. Oh, is he?

JOE. Here's his note.

LOIS. Thanks. Yes, I suppose I may as well speak to him on the way out. (*He picks up mail.*) And listen, you old melon, be nice to him when he comes in here, won't you?

JOE. Sure.

LOIS. Good-bye.

JOE. Good-bye.

(*Exit LOIS. JOE, left to himself, rings for his stenographer and begins to sign letters madly.*)

(*Enter GRACE.*)

JOE. I haven't read these—so check up everything.

GRACE. (*Handing him the sheets deftly, one by one.*) Yes, Mr. Cobb.

JOE. Oh, Lord— (*Picking up a blank.*) You'll have to lie for me about this—no time to see him. (*Passes another.*) Stall it off until next week.

GRACE. Yes, Mr. Cobb.

(*Enter PETER with bag and top-coat.*)

PETER. Mr. Henderson's here.

JOE. (*To GRACE.*) Have to postpone this one, too—and ask the shipping people about him in the meantime.

(*Enter HENDERSON. MARTIN HENDERSON is a slim, alert, gray-haired man of sixty. His manner is kindly, but decisive. His face is lined and his jaw is that of a fighter. His speech is usually guarded, except when he is alone with JOE.*)

HENDERSON. Hello, Joe! (*To PETER, handing him his hat.*) I'm not in to anybody.

JOE. (*To GRACE.*) Look that up for me. (*Exit PETER.*) Let me know. (*Exit GRACE.*)

HENDERSON. (*Sitting down at his desk.*) How are things, Joe?

JOE. The General's here.

HENDERSON. Oh. That's good. How's the market?

JOE. Weak.

HENDERSON. I left a stop-order on that G. M.

JOE. I took a chance and countermanded.

HENDERSON. That's a good boy, Joe—keep your eyes open. Don't know what I'd do without you.

JOE. (*Laughing.*) Neither do I.

HENDERSON. (*Opening a file folder.*) Don't try to be funny, though, Joe, will you, 'cause I had a hard day yesterday—learned a lot about Washington. I'm glad to be back.

JOE. (*Flippantly, as he works at his correspondence.*) What did Cal have to say?

HENDERSON. Not much. They're going to change the name of the White House—call it the Ice House. He certainly keeps cool when you want something.

JOE. (*Unconcerned.*) Then the administration won't do anything?

HENDERSON. The administration can't do anything. That's what they say, anyhow. The same old cry—the public isn't ready for it yet. Where you got that damned Mexican?

JOE. (*Lowering his voice.*) In there.

HENDERSON. Why didn't you say so? All right. Never mind. I'll see him in a minute. Now, young Parkman's coming here—President's son—he's a friend of my daughter's.

JOE. He's outside now.

HENDERSON. All right. Let's get down to business.

JOE. (*Reading his scribbled notes.*) The boss at No. 7 Mine at the Spread Eagle is waiting. He says the new governor is questioning our title to the land. Doesn't think we'll be able to ship.

HENDERSON. Here's the situation, Joe. Down in Washington they said conditions are bad, but they don't think they've reached a diplomatic crisis yet.

JOE. Yes, sir.

HENDERSON. So we'll have to see what we can do about it—that's about all there is left—either

throw a billion dollar property in the waste-basket or do something.

JOE. Yes, sir. Shall I bring the diplomatic crisis in?

HENDERSON. Go ahead. Let's get it over.

(JOE goes to the door of the directors' room.)

JOE. All right, General. Mr. Henderson will see you now.

(GENERAL enters.)

HENDERSON. Hello, General.

GENERAL. (*Bowing coldly.*) Señor Henderson. At last after three days I am able to find you.

HENDERSON. Well, General de Castro, it isn't that I wouldn't like to meet you every day in the week, but I've been rather pressed for time.

GENERAL. Have you decide?

HENDERSON. I want to talk things over with you.

GENERAL. (*Very coldly.*) The cause of liberty is waiting. Have you decide?

HENDERSON. Sit down.

(*The GENERAL does not move, although JOE places a chair.*)

GENERAL. We have talked before, Señor Henderson. Now I am ready to act.

HENDERSON. Sit down. Have a cigar. (GENERAL hesitates.) Sit down.

(The GENERAL gives in and seats himself. JOE passes cigars, Bankers' Club Perfectos. The GENERAL bows his thanks.)

HENDERSON. I want to know where I stand and I want to know where I'm going. That's a fair proposition, isn't it?

(JOE stands behind HENDERSON as a prompter.)

GENERAL. I think it would be fair, Señor, if we should know where both of us stand. If you will pardon, Señor, I too would like to know where I am going.

HENDERSON. You bet you would. And I want you to know. Everything's on the table. I may be a little hard, sometimes, but I'm a square shooter.

GENERAL. Shooter?

HENDERSON. Not your kind—a square shooter—no tricks. I may drive a hard bargain but I stick to it. Now you want to know where I stand? All right, I'll tell you. I believe that economic security down in your country can be improved by a change of government.

GENERAL. There is no doubt.

HENDERSON. I've invested a good deal of money down there—believed a lot of hot air about the fair play we'd get—went right in head over heels. Why, the Spread Eagle alone, which is just a subsidiary, owns one hundred thousand

acres of land. Yes, owns it. Huh! That is, we thought we owned it. First, you taxed us to death, then you grafted us to death, and now you've passed a law saying we don't own it anyway. (*He leans back and speaks reflectively.*) Your country needs some civilization, some stability. Your country's got to have what you might call an honest man—to put it quite frankly, somebody who, when he's bought, will stay bought.

GENERAL. I am here, Señor.

HENDERSON. Oh, yes, you're here, but where will you be a year from now?

GENERAL. At your service, Señor—or I will be dead.

HENDERSON. (*To JOE.*) They all talk fine before they get your money. (*To GENERAL.*) All right, General. If you can get the control of all that property—and if you can keep your control, we'll pay you. Is that right?

GENERAL. Si, Señor. You shall have the peace and the security.

HENDERSON. How many men have you got?

GENERAL. How many dollars have you given me?

HENDERSON. (*As if mentioning a huge sum.*) One hundred thousand dollars.

GENERAL. (*Shrugging his shoulders.*) That is not the cost of a revolution. That is the cost of a fiesta.

HENDERSON. Well, now, let's see. What do you need money for? You've got to charter a steamer.

GENERAL. Si.

HENDERSON. Thirty thousand. You'll want twenty thousand used Enfield rifles—Hell—Mausers are good enough. They're cheaper. You want fifty Brownings—machine-guns——

GENERAL. Only fifty?

JOE. Might make it a hundred.

HENDERSON. Yes, a hundred. You'll want ten three-inch field pieces—I mean cannons. You'll want five million rounds of ammunition for the rifles and twenty thousand rounds of shrapnel and gas for the field pieces—savvy *gas*, General?

GENERAL. (*Nodding.*) There is also what you call it, Señor—yes, the propaganda.

HENDERSON. Yeah?

JOE. (*Prompting him.*) Liquor.

HENDERSON. (*Counting on his fingers as he checks off probable cost of each item.*) Well, rifles, machine-guns, cannons, stores, hootch, delivery, ammunition. Let's see. That would mount up. Call it four hundred thousand dollars for the lot, including good will. (*Assent.*) Then, General, we've got you.

GENERAL. Si——

HENDERSON. And I figure you'll cost us more than the ammunition.

GENERAL. Señor, I am a General.

HENDERSON. Well, four hundred thousand dollars for equipment and two for yourself. Call it six hundred and fifty thousand dollars for everything, cash. More than a million and a half pesos, General. All right. (*He slaps his first down on the table.*) Now what can you do for that?

(GENERAL DE CASTRO rises, leaning over table, placing articles to make a map. HENDERSON watches. JOE stands between them. The GENERAL is enthusiastic.)

GENERAL. This (*placing inkwell*) is Bahia on the coast. My guns and ammunition are land there. I have three thousand men. I march inland. In three days I have five thousand men. Here is the town of Gallego. (*Places book-end to mark the town.*) I take it. I lose fifty men but I get five thousand recruits. Now, I have ten thousand men.

JOE. (*Amused.*) Less fifty.

GENERAL. (*Puzzled but annoyed.*) I wait two days. Now, I have a railroad. I run the trains—to Marcia. (*Indicating.*)

JOE. (*Giving it the English pronunciation for HENDERSON's benefit.*) Marsha.

GENERAL. Here is a garrison. There is a battle. I lose two hundred, three hundred men. I take the town. Now, Señor, I am in the district of my childhood. I know every canyon, every

pass, every railroad bridge. This my victory has made a magnificent stir among the Federals. I gain five thousand men. From Chihuahua they send an army against me. Señor, I am a General. What is an army to me? They think to fight me in Marcia. But no! I am here in the canyon, fifty miles away with my machine-guns and my cavalry. The Federals come on the railroad train. But the first engine do not see the dynamite I have buried under the tracks and the wire. Poof! Señor, I have done it before. In 1911 I did it in Sonora. In 1916 with my friend, Pancho Villa, in Cohudila, I did it. Señor, this will be the most magnificent train wreck in the history of my country. Hundreds will be killed. All beside the tracks there will be bodies. Those who are not killed will come running out. Then, Señor, I begin firing with my machine-guns. When my machine-guns are through, I come with my cavalry.

JOE. It sounds like a good war.

HENDERSON. Well, where do you go from there?

GENERAL. North. Past here. (*Placing a book.*) Past here—into the property of the Spread Eagle Mining Company—into your land.

HENDERSON. Don't get me mixed up in this.

GENERAL. As you wish, Señor. But where we go, we take, we burn. If we do not do so on

your property, everyone will understand. Even now my enemies are suspicious of the Spread Eagle Company.

HENDERSON. I'll say this for you, General. Up to now you've never practiced any foolhardy restraint. Your men raided us, wrecked our shelter, stole our mules and killed our bookkeeper.

GENERAL. Señor, a thousand regrets that we should have killed a man of yours.

HENDERSON. (*Matter-of-fact.*) Joe, get out a letter to all Spread Eagle employees north of Marcia. Tell 'em that, in the event of trouble, they are hereby warned to use discretion.

GENERAL. Then anyone found on the Spread Eagle property will not be one of your—shall I say, valued employees?

HENDERSON. (*Quickly.*) No. I don't want you to say any such thing. I don't approve of your atrocities at all. Mind, I don't criticize you, General. I believe in letting every man tend to his own business and I try to practice what I preach. I hope we understand each other. Now, you want some money, don't you?

GENERAL. It is very important.

HENDERSON. I'll place it to your credit at my broker's.

GENERAL. This money is ready for me now?

HENDERSON. Yes. And if you ever double-cross me—if you ever let anyone know that I—I

financed your— (*hesitates*) political struggles— there'll be another revolution.

GENERAL. Señor, it would be as bad for me as it would for you— Why, if anyone should say such a thing, even if it was my brother, that person will stand against a wall and— (*gestures*).

HENDERSON. (*Rising.*) All right. I trust you. And the minute I stop trusting you, the money stops. (*JOE walks over and opens the door for GENERAL DE CASTRO to pass out.*) You'll hear from me as soon as Mr. Cobb arranges that credit.

GENERAL. (*Not offering to shake hands.*) Ah, Señors, good-bye. I think, as you say, we understand each other.

(*Exit GENERAL DE CASTRO.*)

HENDERSON. (*Thinking aloud.*) Well, I don't know what will happen, but it's worth taking a chance. Joe, tell 'em to rush that credit through.

JOE. (*At phone.*) Get me Evans.

HENDERSON. (*Talking partly to himself.*) You know (*looking out of the window, speaking slowly*) there's one thing I like about you, Joe—you never ask questions. This Spread Eagle affair, for instance—I might expect you to be shocked at what I've just done——

JOE. Do I looked shocked?

HENDERSON. No, I don't mean shocked like a girl over a little outspokenness—I mean that you might think I'm losing my judgment.

JOE. (*Frankly.*) I don't think it is the wisest thing you ever did.

HENDERSON. (*Mildly.*) I like to gamble.

JOE. (*Into phone.*) Have Evans call me. (*To HENDERSON.*) I can see that this deal may prove expensive before we're through. The up-keep on a revolution, they tell me, is worse than the first cost.

HENDERSON. (*Smiling at JOE's phrase.*) We can't look at this in terms of now. (*He walks to JOE's desk.*) We must picture what it will mean to the country in terms of fifty years from now.

JOE. I'm not so sure his government will be any more stable than any of the others!

HENDERSON. I should hope not. That's the point. The only kind of a Mexican leader that's worth a damn from my point of view is one so bad he causes American intervention.

JOE. It'll take something pretty big to start that!

HENDERSON. (*Going uneasily to the window.*) Maybe—maybe not. Back in 1916 the Hearst interests tried to force intervention. They didn't get away with it—but just the same, Joe, they'd planted the idea in the people's minds—the idea of a United States that reaches, as it should, right down to the Panama Canal.

JOE. It's got to come——

HENDERSON. The oil people tried it—but

every time you mention the word oil the public thinks you mean crook—that Teapot Dome scandal finished that crowd.

JOE. (*Grinning.*) Yes, their little black satchel is pretty cold now. The boys are even writing novels about it.

HENDERSON. (*Good-naturedly.*) Now the Catholic Church wants intervention, but the Klan offsets that influence. This is a Methodist government, if it's anything. You see, Joe, although not one of these movements to force intervention was successful, they have all helped.

JOE. It takes a lot to start a war——

HENDERSON. (*Quickly protesting.*) No! No! Don't say "war," Joe. It wouldn't be war. We wouldn't send in an army, but an armed constabulary. England never fought a weaker opponent. She preserves order.

JOE. (*Laughing.*) I'll tell you how to tell whether it's a war or not. If they just throw you in the kitchen for a week for going A.W.O.L. it's strike duty, but if they send you to Leavenworth it's war.

HENDERSON. I won't quibble over words—but mark you, intervention in Mexico will be like an avalanche. It won't take much to start it, but it must be the right thing.

(*JOE's phone rings.*)

JOE. (*Into phone.*) Evans?

HENDERSON. Yes, hurry that credit.

(*Enter LOIS.*)

(*JOE speaks inaudibly into the phone.*)

LOIS. Father, I've been way down to the dock and back and you haven't sent for Mr. Parkman.

HENDERSON. (*With real tenderness.*) I'm very sorry. It's all Joe's fault. He keeps me so busy. (*He kisses her.*) (*Into phone.*) Ask Mr. Parkman to step in.

JOE. (*Into phone.*) I'll take it in the other room. (*Exits to directors' room, carrying his papers.*)

HENDERSON. (*To LOIS.*) I talked to Senator Cunningham about a horse for you. He says that he knows just the mount you want.

LOIS. My word. You need a guardian. Did you go to Washington to buy me a horse?

HENDERSON. (*Quickly deprecating the idea.*) No, no. I really had business—quite important business, too. The horse was an afterthought.

(*Enter PETER, showing PARKMAN in.*)

(*CHARLES PARKMAN is a clean-cut, well-dressed and very presentable type of college graduate. He overcomes a naturally diffident manner by holding a naively good opinion of himself.*)

PARKMAN. Hello——

LOIS. Oh, here you are now. Father, this is Charles Parkman.

(Exit PETER. PARKMAN advances into the room.)

HENDERSON. (*Seated.*) A good many years ago I went to the White House to see Mr. Parkman's father. But there were always a lot of people to see President Parkman. So I waited there all day and I couldn't get in.

PARKMAN. (HENDERSON rises.) How do you do?

HENDERSON. (*Shaking hands.*) Mr. Parkman, I'm glad to meet you. (*To LOIS as she starts for the door.*) Don't go, Lois. We can talk with you here and then I'll be free until after lunch. You don't mind if Lois stays—do you, Parkman?

PARKMAN. Why, no, sir. I wish she would.

HENDERSON. So, Mr. Parkman, when you get to be President you can keep me waiting, too.

PARKMAN. I'm afraid that will never be, Mr. Henderson.

(LOIS sits in chair by window.)

HENDERSON. Well, my boy, you can't tell. You can't tell.

PARKMAN. But, you see, I don't want to be President——

HENDERSON. You don't? So you're going to turn down the Presidency, eh? The Roosevelt boys will be glad to hear that.

PARKMAN. (*Laughing.*) It does sound rather ridiculous the way you put it, Mr. Henderson. Of

course, I realize it's not going to be offered to me, not next week anyhow.

HENDERSON. (*Good-natured.*) You're all right.

PARKMAN. All I was trying to say was that I really haven't any ambition in that direction. As a matter of fact, I find that the honor of being a President's son is a terrible burden. Yes, it is.

HENDERSON. (*Seeing Joe's phone receiver is off—only half-attentive to PARKMAN.*) Yes? Would you mind putting back that receiver on the hook?

PARKMAN. (*Places the receiver back.*) I haven't any interest in politics whatsoever. Why, I didn't even vote last year.

HENDERSON. I have a suspicion one or two others slipped up.

LOIS. Yes, and I know who.

HENDERSON. You're not supposed to talk. (*To PARKMAN.*) Mind you, I'm not making light of the ballot. But for your own information, if you don't vote in New York you're likely to get hooked for jury service. (*PARKMAN laughs.*) Mr. Parkman, your father and I differed on a great many points, but as the years roll by I've come to look upon him as one of the really great men that this country has produced. He was a leader, my boy, with a sound Mexican policy.

PARKMAN. (*Very much embarrassed.*) Yes,

sir. I hope you don't think it conceited of me to say so, Mr. Henderson, but I feel that I have certain qualities of leadership myself—only I don't happen to have any leaning toward the political side of things. Anyhow, I may as well come directly to the point. I want a job.

HENDERSON. Well, I'll tell you, frankly, Mr. Parkman, I like your spirit.

PARKMAN. Of course I realize that there's a lot of hard work in store for me—especially in the earlier stages—but I'm not afraid of hard work. I don't know how much executive ability I may have, but, at least, I can assure you that I have integrity.

HENDERSON. I'm sure you have, my boy, and I don't know any better foundation for success.

PARKMAN. I haven't had any practical experience, but I'm willing to start at the bottom—or anywhere that you think advisable.

HENDERSON. I see.

PARKMAN. And, as far as salary goes, I'm willing to start for something very nominal, just enough to live on.

HENDERSON. (*Seriously.*) I see. And how much is that?

PARKMAN. I thought, as a start, I could get about five thousand.

HENDERSON. (*Amused.*) Every spring there seem to be a good many young men willing to start

at the bottom for about five thousand a year. (*The phone rings.*) Well, that's fine. I'll give you a good, practical tip at the beginning of your career—get all you can. (*Speaking into the phone.*) Hello. All right. (*He turns to Parkman while waiting for the phone connection to be made.*) How would you like to go to China?

PARKMAN. Anywhere you say, sir.

HENDERSON. You're game, eh?

PARKMAN. I'll try to be.

HENDERSON. (*Speaking into the phone.*) Yes—yeah. No, no, no. Mr. Cobb is attending—wait just a minute. (*He hangs up the receiver and starts toward the door.*) Excuse me. (*He goes into the directors' room.*)

(*JOE's voice is heard in the next room as*

HENDERSON opens the door.)

JOE. That's what he wants. You'll do it and like——

LOIS. (*Coming eagerly toward PARKMAN.*) Father's taken an awful shine to you.

PARKMAN. Really.

LOIS. Yes. I've never seen him warm up to anyone like that before in my life. Only don't be too modest. I don't think it gets you anything to start too near the bottom. Make him give you a good job. I don't think you asked for enough salary, either.

PARKMAN. I thought maybe I asked too much.

Lois. Oh, help. They're all rich. You'll be making money for them. Why shouldn't you get some of it?

PARKMAN. Well, after all, he hasn't offered me anything yet.

Lois. I feel terribly important, just the same, to think that I brought you and father together. I think I deserve a commission.

PARKMAN. That's what I'm hoping for, Lois. Not the job, just the commission. I'm going to give my best to this job and make you proud of me. (*She rises and turns away from him.*) Now, don't be cross. (*He starts toward her and then hesitates.*) I'm not going to say anything sentimental. That's the reason I'm going away.

Lois. What do you mean, Charles?

PARKMAN. So I won't annoy you.

Lois. How can you say such a thing?

PARKMAN. There's no denying that I do annoy you.

Lois. If I could make myself love you just by wishing it, then I would. But I don't think I can make you understand how I feel. It seems just that I know you too well.

PARKMAN. (*In an angry and despairing tone.*) My God, is it as bad as that?

Lois. (*Protesting.*) You don't know what I mean at all.

PARKMAN. I think I do. You want a hero and I'm not it. You'd like me better if I'd had more experience—if I were older. Well, that's one thing I can't hasten at all—I'm sorry.

LOIS. Let's not talk about it.

PARKMAN. You'll marry someone else, probably, while I'm over in China.

LOIS. I won't.

PARKMAN. Is that a promise? You wouldn't care to say that you won't marry anyone for a year till I come back?

LOIS. This doesn't seem really the most appropriate place to talk about it— (*As the door opens she speaks in a hurried and more friendly tone.*) Come in for tea to-morrow.

(*As HENDERSON comes in JOE's voice is heard from the next room.*)

JOE. The hell you will. The hell you will.

HENDERSON. (*Smiling as he closes the door.*) Don't mind Joe's language. He's looking after our interests.

LOIS. We've both heard the word before.

(*JOE enters and goes to HENDERSON's desk.*)

HENDERSON. Everything all right, Joe?

JOE. (*Handing papers to HENDERSON.*) All set.

HENDERSON. Quick work. (*He goes to his desk to examine his papers.*)

LOIS. Mr. Parkman—Mr. Cobb. (*They shake hands.*)

JOE. Glad to know you, Mr. Parkman. (*He shows HENDERSON where to sign the papers.*) The night your father was elected President was the first time I ever got drunk.

HENDERSON. (*Looking up at them.*) Joe, Mr. Parkman is willing to become associated with us. Do you know if we have any jobs open?

JOE. It all depends. What does Mr. Parkman want to do? (*He points out another place for HENDERSON to sign.*)

PARKMAN. (*Very eager and obliging.*) Anything at all, Mr. Cobb.

HENDERSON. Anything that pays about five thousand a year. I thought we might find something in one of the foreign offices.

PARKMAN. I want to put myself completely in your hands, if you don't think it's a presumption.

HENDERSON. That's the way I like to hear a man talk.

JOE. Well, as Mr. Henderson was intimating—(*he rings*) the best salaries come with the rottenest countries. Siberia pays very well—(*PETER enters and takes out some papers from HENDERSON's desk. As the door opens GRACE is seen seated at the desk outside.*) Mexico, Columbia, Brazil, Dutch Guiana, China, India. Of course,

the biggest turnover's in Mexico. (*He busies himself with some papers.*)

HENDERSON. Joe, what did we pay you when you began here?

JOE. Twenty dollars a week. But you paid it on a monthly basis, so that made it eighteen.

HENDERSON. (*Smiling.*) You were worth it. (*He turns his attention to the letters and papers on his desk.*)

PARKMAN. I'm willing to go any place. If all this stuff in the papers is true, I should think the most adventure would be in Mexico.

JOE. Plenty of adventure, all right. But it's not our most popular office.

PARKMAN. Really, I'm quite attracted by the idea.

JOE. It's dangerous. And also, they tell me, it's lonesome. It's picturesque, but—well, you know—the music is good but the service is poor.

PARKMAN. Personally, I don't think it's nearly so dangerous as some people are wanting to make out.

JOE. The United States Government is still trying to collect an indemnity for the sixteen mining engineers Pancho Villa killed. That's just one item. Every time there's a revolution a few Americans seem to step in front of it.

PARKMAN. Somehow, I can't feel that anything would be likely to happen to me.

JOE. (*In a sarcastic tone.*) Of course, you're not a mining engineer. If they should have the bad taste to kill you, the United States would have an army on the way down there inside of ten minutes— (*He looks at PARKMAN, then catches the eye of HENDERSON and stammers a little as he continues.*) Of course, if— (*JOE stops his speech in mid-air as though suddenly becoming conscious of its import. He looks at PARKMAN, who is smiling peacefully, a bit embarrassed. Then he looks at HENDERSON. They hold each other's eyes for a second significantly. JOE walks the floor in an almost excited manner.*)

PARKMAN. (*Entirely oblivious to any special meaning in JOE's last remark, and embarrassed by the sudden pause in the conversation.*) I really don't think I'm so important as all that.

JOE. (*Slowly, looking very steadily at HENDERSON.*) Maybe not, it's hard to tell.

HENDERSON. (*Speaking in a carefully casual tone.*) Still, Joe, this young man might—might—might prove very valuable in a new country like that—new organization—big opportunities. (*He catches JOE's eye again.*)

JOE. Yes, indeed. (*He watches HENDERSON.*)

PARKMAN. (*In an eager, cheery tone.*) I only wish you'd give me a chance.

HENDERSON. (*Slowly.*) Well, we will. That is, that is, we'll consider it. Well, now, let's get

down to cases— Good many important things waiting to be looked into. (*He walks about rather nervously.*) Now, let's see. Where were we? Now, you want a job and you think you'd like to go to Mexico—is that the situation?

PARKMAN. (*Earnestly.*) I want a job, Mr. Henderson, and I want to go any place that you put me.

HENDERSON. Joe, step outside and see if that foreman of the Spread Eagle is still around. If not, have him sent for. (*JOE goes out.*) Like to offer you your choice of countries—like making things as pleasant for you as possible—have a feeling that the association is something that will be of great value to—to both of us. We'll see what's open. That's the thing. As I recall it, however, there's a chance—just a bare chance—that we might be able to use the right man at one of our mines down across the border. (*PARKMAN and LOIS smile at each other.*) Now, how would you feel about that?

PARKMAN. Of course, in all fairness to you, I ought to say that I don't know how well fitted I am for this work.

HENDERSON. That's what we want to find out.

(*JOE comes in.*)

JOE. He's coming.

PARKMAN. I had two years of Spanish, but I understand college Spanish isn't much help.

HENDERSON. I don't think it would necessarily keep you out. A knowledge of Spanish isn't absolutely essential for our Mexican office, is it, Joe?

JOE. No, sir, not at all.

HENDERSON. What we want to do is find the right man. If we decide that a man is the right man, then we overlook these little language problems. In fact, we might even consider that five thousand dollar salary you mentioned.

PARKMAN. I imagine living is very cheap down there.

HENDERSON. Oh, very, very. Now, young man, I control a corporation known as the Spread Eagle Mining Company. It's a big proposition and it's going to be bigger. I think a lot of it. Yes, sir, a lot of it. In fact, I think so much of that property that I'm making an effort to get the right people started with it— Now, among our other properties, we have a location called Mine Number Seven at Mercedes. The foreman of that mine happens to be right in this vicinity. I'll tell you what I'll do, young man. If you really want to get into the business world, I'll give you a chance. I'll let you go down to Mercedes with this foreman, to take a position there as one of the assistant general superintendents at a salary of five thousand dollars a year.

PARKMAN. (*Holding out his hand.*) Mr. Henderson, I accept.

!

HENDERSON. (*Shaking hands, but not too heartily.*) Fine. Fine.

PARKMAN. Well, Lois, you see I owe you the commission. I can't tell you how grateful I am for this opportunity, Mr. Henderson.

HENDERSON. That's all right. That's all right.

PARKMAN. But I want you to know that I do appreciate it.

HENDERSON. Don't say a word now. It's just business with me. In fact, I don't know but I ought to warn you that you're taking a little bit of risk. You'll be well paid—much better, in fact, than most men are when they start. And, of course, as far as the risk is concerned, young men like risks. Look at the thousands of young men like Joe Cobb who volunteered to go overseas and fight the Hun.

PARKMAN. I only wish I'd been old enough to go.

JOE. You may get your chance yet.

PARKMAN. Well, they say that there's a war for every generation.

HENDERSON. Going down to Mercedes isn't quite the same thing as going to war. It's a gamble, Mr. Parkman. But then, all life's a gamble. You get your money and you take your chance. (*PETER opens the door and RIORDAN enters.*) Oh, here he is. Come in, Mister—ah——

JOE. Riordan.

(RIORDAN is a sunburned, whiskey-drinking, stocky Irishman, a typical gang boss. In HENDERSON's office he feels very ill at ease.)

HENDERSON. Yes, Riordan. Come in.

RIORDAN. Thank you, sir.

HENDERSON. Wanted to talk to you before, but I didn't get around to it.

RIORDAN. They told me to be handy.

HENDERSON. Riordan, I want you to shake hands—(*turning towards PARKMAN*) Mr. Charles Parkman. (*They shake hands.*)

PARKMAN. How do you do——

RIORDAN. Pleased to meet you.

HENDERSON. Mr. Riordan is boss of Number Seven Mine.

PARKMAN. Oh, I see.

HENDERSON. Business is pretty rotten now, eh, Riordan?

RIORDAN. Yes, sir. The mine's been closed since the last trouble.

HENDERSON. Terrible situation. Don't know what we're going to do. Closed mines don't pay salaries. Mr. Parkman is going back with you, Riordan.

RIORDAN. Beg your pardon?

HENDERSON. I hope you'll find him of great service to you.

PARKMAN. I'll certainly give you my very best, Mr. Riordan.

RIORDAN. To Mercedes?

HENDERSON. Certainly.

RIORDAN. Yes, sir.

HENDERSON. Not much of a crew on hand right now, I guess?

RIORDAN. No, sir. Just enough greasers around to take care of things.

HENDERSON. We'll be opening again soon and I want to be prepared for it.

RIORDAN. There's the laborers, of course, but we got no rockers or blasters—I'm the only white man.

LOIS. The only white man!

RIORDAN. Yes, ma'am. Well, so to speak—you know—American. There's a priest down there that's a pretty good scout—he got his schoolin' in this country. He hangs around my shack most of the time to hear God's language talked for a change. And then there's Mrs. Kent—(HENDERSON *looks up quickly*.) She's the widow of the bookkeeper that was murdered, you know, in the last trouble.

HENDERSON. (*Hurriedly*.) Oh, yes. Yes, I recall. Regrettable incident.

PARKMAN. (*Taking a purely academic interest in these remarks*.) It seems incredible that such things can happen.

HENDERSON. Well, there's danger everywhere

as far as that goes—look at the streets of New York.

JOE. Look at Chicago.

LOIS. It's different from what I thought! Just these two men and one woman.

RIORDAN. She'd leave but she can't on account of her health. She's a lunger.

LOIS. Oh, it will be awfully lonely.

PARKMAN. (*Cheerily.*) I suppose the thing to do is to take along plenty of good books and magazines.

HENDERSON. That's the spirit. Now everybody understands the situation. (*He rises.*) Let's see, we want to give Mr. Parkman the contract. Here, I'll attend to it myself. We don't sign a President's son every day in the week. (*He rises.*) Just come with me. You also, Riordan.

(HENDERSON, PARKMAN, and RIORDAN go out. LOIS is about to follow when JOE stops her.)

JOE. Lois——

LOIS. (*Turning.*) Yes?

JOE. (*Deeply concerned.*) I want you to do something for me.

LOIS. Of course, Joe. What is it?

JOE. (*In a serious tone.*) Tell me the truth.

LOIS. You're laughing at me again.

JOE. No. I mean this. Tell me what you think of Parkman.

LOIS. (*Teasingly.*) What do you think?

JOE. What I think makes no difference. Do you like him?

LOIS. (*Somewhat surprised.*) Yes. Why?

JOE. How much?

LOIS. I like him just as I like dozens of other boys. Do you like him?

JOE. Oh, he'll be all right, if he has time to grow up.

LOIS. That's it, Joe. I like people like you who are grown-up men—who've done things——

JOE. (*With a warning smile.*) Be careful.

LOIS. (*This is her favorite indoor sport.*) What would you have said if I'd told you I liked Mr. Parkman more?

JOE. Whatever it was, I've changed my mind.

LOIS. (*With a puzzled glance.*) Crazy! Good-bye. (*LOIS goes out and JOE, sitting at his desk, watches her with a speculative expression.*)

(*HENDERSON enters, very thoughtful, and goes to desk. Both men are disturbed. They fumble with their papers. Then they look up. Their eyes meet.*)

JOE. (*Slowly.*) Well. (*He grins sardonically.*) In the words of the American Magazine, he got the job.

CURTAIN.

ACT II

ACT II

SCENE 1

The interior of the office shack of the Spread Eagle Mining Company at Mercedes. In sharp contrast to the office of MARTIN HENDERSON, his superintendent's shack at the mine is as bare, forlorn, and unlivable as can well be imagined. It is late afternoon and since evening shadows have already fallen, a coal oil lamp with a smoky chimney that hangs from the roof has been lighted. It is about six months after Act I.

The shack is built of rough, unmatched boards. The rafters and posts of unplanned "two by fours" are uncovered. On the right is an open door that discloses a tiny covered "porch." On the left is a double-decked bunk, screened with a gay, native Mexican blanket.

An uncurtained window is in the rear. In one corner of this cheerless room is a small sheet-iron stove. The pipe goes straight up through the roof. The other furnishings consist of home-made chairs and a home-made desk.

On either side of the door are pegs on which are hung saddles, bridles, blankets, and canvas "water monkeys." PARKMAN's suitcases and his

steamer trunk are shoved against the wall near the bunks.

When the curtain rises, PARKMAN is seated at the rough table, finishing an entry in a time-keeper's book. He closes the book, goes to a shelf, and brings out a money box, which he opens.

PARKMAN is wearing khaki pants, high shoes, and a gray flannel shirt.

(MANUEL enters. MANUEL is a lazy Mexican boy of sixteen or seventeen. His clothes are the cast-off garments of some American.)

PARKMAN. What kept you so long, Manuel? I sent for you over an hour ago.

MANUEL. Pump engine break. Señor Riordan say to help Sanchez.

PARKMAN. Well, anyhow, now that you're here, I want you to go to town and find Father Estrella for me. Ask him to come right away.

MANUEL. Where I go? I donno where to find him.

PARKMAN. You'll find him easily enough. Hurry. It's very important.

MANUEL. Maybe the Padre come soon himself. Maybe he come now.

PARKMAN. For the Lord's sake, Manuel, what's the matter with you? Why the devil are you so lazy?

MANUEL. I not lazy.

PARKMAN. Then do as I ask you to instead of crying about it. What's gotten into the lot of you? Aren't the men satisfied?

MANUEL. (*Shrugging.*) No comprendo.

PARKMAN. (*As he sees ROSALIE through the doorway.*) Hello, Rosalie. (*She comes in.*)

(ROSALIE KENT, widow of the murdered bookkeeper, is a tall, angular woman of thirty-five. She is so accustomed to being with men that her speech has caught the direct, incisive quality of a good mine boss. She does not show any indication, physically, of her long winning fight with T.B.)

ROSALIE. Hello, Manuel.

MANUEL. Buenos dias, señora.

PARKMAN. Hurry along, Manuel.

MANUEL. Si, señor. (*He starts to go, and then turns back.*) You give me my money now?

PARKMAN. Of course not. You'll be paid off with the others. I'll be here when you get back. Marchese.

(MANUEL goes out.)

ROSALIE. I thought you were coming over this afternoon to help check up on those books.

PARKMAN. I've had troubles of my own.

ROSALIE. What's the matter with you? The spigs?

PARKMAN. (*Nodding.*) Yeah.

ROSALIE. Again?

PARKMAN. (*Angrily.*) I can't do anything with them. Some of 'em didn't come to work this morning. About noon all except three or four quit. Now they say they're going, too.

ROSALIE. (*With a shrug.*) What'd you care? If they don't work, we don't have to, either.

PARKMAN. It leaves me in a rotten position.

ROSALIE. Yes?

PARKMAN. When Mr. Henderson said that he wanted us to be ready to re-open——

ROSALIE. The way you worry over Henderson, anybody'd think he owed you money.

PARKMAN. (*Irritated by her flippant tone.*) I wish you wouldn't start that again, Rosalie. You've got to admit Mr. Henderson has been mighty decent to me.

ROSALIE. (*Bitterly.*) Sure. He was nice to me, too. Why, when Jim was killed he wrote me a long letter telling how sorry he was. Yes, and offered me Jim's job, too—at half Jim's salary.

PARKMAN. (*Reproving her.*) You don't understand how big the Henderson organization is. It's very doubtful if he ever saw that letter——

ROSALIE. (*In a hard tone.*) Get this, though. Henderson don't see lots of things, but you'll notice that the stuff he don't see all makes money for Martin Henderson just the same.

PARKMAN. (*Coldly.*) You must remember I know him and you don't. Why, I wouldn't work for a man I didn't respect.

ROSALIE. (*With a little laugh.*) Then you don't need money as bad as I do. Every time the pay checks come in, I say to myself, "The nice thing about this is that Martin Henderson had to pay you more than you earned."

PARKMAN. (*Changing the topic.*) I've sent for Father Estrella to talk to the men.

ROSALIE. After you've stuck in this dump as long as Mike and I have, you'll get over some of your rah-rah stuff. By the way, where is Rior-dan?

PARKMAN. (*Remembering his responsibilities.*) That's what I want to know. He's been gone all the afternoon.

(*MANUEL comes in.*)

MANUEL. The Padre come now.

PARKMAN. All right. Tell Jose and the others I want them to come here.

MANUEL. Si. (*He goes out.*)

ROSALIE. Give 'em their money. Tell 'em to get out and stay out. They'll be back in a week or two, maybe. And if they never come back, it doesn't matter.

PARKMAN. I tell you, I have to get supplies up from the station. They must have come in on to-day's train. There was a big box for me, as

well as the stuff you ordered. If the men would stay, I'd give them an extra day's pay for overtime.

(MANUEL *comes in.*)

MANUEL. Padre, he come.

PARKMAN. Is he out there?

MANUEL. He come here.

PARKMAN. All right. Thank you, Manuel.

ROSALIE. (*In a low tone.*) Listen. The thing that's really wrong with the spigs is this insurrection down in Bahia. Don't let 'em tell you anything different. And if you really want to impress them, get hard. Tell 'em you're Martin Henderson's personal representative—that would even scare me. (*In a friendly tone as she turns to go.*) Don't worry too much about it, Charles. It isn't worth while. If they want to quit, they'll quit and the Angel Gabriel couldn't keep them working. (*She goes out.*)

PARKMAN. (*Trying to be courteous, but wounded by her attitude.*) Thank you, thank you, Rosalie. (*Turning toward MANUEL.*) Manuel, why is it nobody wants to work? What is the matter? Can't you tell me that?

MANUEL. (*Blankly.*) No comprendo.

PARKMAN. You're hiding something. What is it?

MANUEL. I don't know. No comprendo.

(*Four PEONS enter, followed by ESTRELLA. They are all talking in Spanish.*)

(ESTRELLA is a young priest of Spanish-Mexican ancestry. He wears a dark business suit. From his gold watch chain hangs a large crucifix. His English is bookish and precise. PARKMAN cannot follow the flow of Spanish.)

ESTRELLA. Si. Pero porque no quieren trabajar? (Yes. But why won't you work?)

FIRST PEON. No hay mucho trabajo que hacer. (There isn't much work to do.)

ESTRELLA. Pero si se les paga? (But if they pay you?)

FIRST PEON. Tambien puede ser que haya guerra. Nosotros no queremos trabajar si va a ver guerra. (Perhaps we have a war, too. We don't want to be working if there's going to be a war.)

SECOND PEON. Para que trabajar duro y acabar algo bien, si el Angelo Negro viene y lo destroza todo? (What good is it to get a lot of work done, if the Black Angel comes and smashes everything?)

MANUEL. El viendra, seguro. (He's coming, sure.)

ESTRELLA. Si?

MANUEL. No queremos trabajar. Estes es un pais libre, lo mismo que alla en el norte. (We don't want to work. It's a free country, just like the States.)

PARKMAN. Father Estrella——

MANUEL. No queremos trabajar. (We don't want to work.)

ESTRELLA. (*To MANUEL.*) Callese la boca, un momento. (Hold your tongue a minute.)

PARKMAN. Father Estrella. It seems to me that they should give me a reason.

SECOND PEON. Huh.

ESTRELLA. I'm afraid they're not being entirely frank.

PARKMAN. They go to your church. They ought to tell you the truth.

ESTRELLA. If I were you, Mr. Parkman, I wouldn't bring any more pressure on them to-day.

PARKMAN. Good Lord. I have to get this freight up from the depot.

MANUEL. No esta allí. El tren no ha salido. (It isn't there. The train hasn't run.)

ESTRELLA. Manuel says the train hasn't run.

PARKMAN. I know the train was coming to-day. The agent said so.

ESTRELLA. Sometimes, when things are upset this way, they do not run any trains for several days.

PARKMAN. I should think the Spread Eagle Mining Company is important enough.

FIRST PEON. La compañía no sirve. (Company no good.)

PARKMAN. What did he say about the company?

ESTRELLA. (*Catching his eye and looking*

steadily at him.) If I were you, I would let them go.

PARKMAN. All right. I suppose nobody can make them work—

MANUEL. Sure you can't make us work.

PARKMAN. —if they don't want to. Forty-three. (*Forty-three shows his laborer's tag, and PARKMAN examines the time book and hands out the money.*) That's right, isn't it?

FIRST PEON. Si. (*He takes off his disk, throws it on the floor.*)

PARKMAN. (*To ESTRELLA.*) Does that mean he's never coming back? He runs the donkey engine.

ESTRELLA. I wouldn't pay any attention to him.

(*PARKMAN pays off the other three, seventeen, thirty-two, and twelve. They all throw away their tags. All are paid in silver dollars.*)

PARKMAN. (*As MANUEL steps forward.*) Now, Manuel, before I pay you—what have you done with those big boxes that you got at the station? Big one for me, little one for Mrs. Kent.

MANUEL. No train come. No box come. Ask Señor Riordan go railroad. He know. No find train.

(*A Mexican song is heard in the distance as the PEONS leave the shack.*)

PARKMAN. Are you telling me the truth? (*He*

pays him.) Very well. (MANUEL *jabbers his way out.*) It's the craziest situation I ever saw.

ESTRELLA. You know, of course, that the people are excited about the de Castro army.

PARKMAN. Yes, yes. I know that. But that's no reason to quit.

ESTRELLA. These rumors of war always stir people up.

PARKMAN. (*Exasperated.*) Do you mean to say that they believe they are going to be affected by that one-horse revolution over on the coast?

ESTRELLA. (*Quietly.*) That seems to be what is in their minds. (*He looks questioningly at PARKMAN.*)

PARKMAN. Well, it's beyond me. The last few days the whole attitude of the men has changed. It's like the day of a bull fight. You don't take this thing seriously, yourself, do you? I mean you don't expect that we'll have any actual trouble from de Castro's army?

ESTRELLA. (*Turning away.*) It is safer not to be a prophet.

PARKMAN. I believe you do.

ESTRELLA. I don't want to alarm you.

PARKMAN. You don't. You really don't.

RIORDAN'S VOICE. Vaya a la casa de la Señora Kent. Digale que quiero hablar con ella. (Go to Mrs. Kent's house. Tell her I want to speak with her.)

PARKMAN. Riordan's back, anyhow.

ESTRELLA. I think I'll walk down to the village. If I hear anything that's interesting, I'll drop in later.

PARKMAN. Thanks, Father. If you can persuade any of the men to come back to work, I'll be your debtor for life.

(ESTRELLA goes out. PARKMAN puts away the books and money chest, sits down at the table and picks up a magazine.)

RIORDAN'S VOICE. Hello, Father. You ain't leaving so soon?

ESTRELLA'S VOICE. I'll be back later.

RIORDAN. (*Entering the room quickly and then pausing.*) I told you that stuff wouldn't come. No train's been through.

PARKMAN. I think I'd better take it up with the railroad officials——

RIORDAN. (*Between his teeth.*) More power to you. (*He goes into the room at the back.*)

PARKMAN. If we're going to let these Mexicans run us, we might as well close up shop and go home.

RIORDAN. (*Coming out.*) Mr. Parkman, I'm tellin' you, there's trouble in the offing. Over at the Junction they couldn't even tell when another train might come through.

PARKMAN. (*With dignity.*) I'd like to see what I can do about it myself. (*He goes out.*)

RIORDAN. (*As he picks up a hammer.*) Pin-head. (*He takes up a board in the floor near the stove and brings out baking powder can of gold and paper money. He loads a belt with it. ROSALIE comes in and pauses in the doorway.*)

RIORDAN. Come in, Rosalie.

ROSALIE. (*Smiling.*) Drawing from the bank?

RIORDAN. I think we'd better jump the next train going north.

ROSALIE. (*Suddenly serious.*) What do you know?

RIORDAN. De Castro captured Gallego. Of course his luck may not last. But the latest dope is that he's marching this way.

ROSALIE. There's the garrison at Marcia.

RIORDAN. (*Contemptuously.*) What difference does that make?

ROSALIE. (*Impatiently.*) If you know something, tell me. But if you're just going to rehash the old gossip, never mind.

RIORDAN. I was over to the Junction. Had a little talk with the telegraph operator. I done plenty of favors for that greaser and he tells me straight, see.

ROSALIE. Well?

RIORDAN. His south wires are out. No telegraph south a-tall, see? Last Friday the Federals sent a trainload of troops south. The commanding officer hasn't reported back over the wire.

Marcia hasn't answered. They've been trying to call from Mexico City.

ROSALIE. (*Pausing a moment and then speaking quietly.*) Probably somebody took the telegraph wire to tie a cow.

RIORDAN. If we hear that de Castro's taken Marcia, what'll you do then?

ROSALIE. (*With a brave attempt at a smile.*) What will you do?

RIORDAN. That's somethin' I'll never know. Because I won't be here to find out.

ROSALIE. (*Quickly.*) You mean you want to get out now—to-night?

RIORDAN. Well, now, I ask you, ain't that the safest thing to do?

ROSALIE. (*Slowly.*) Yes, I suppose it is.

RIORDAN. I'm damn glad you didn't argue about it. I was afraid you would. Well, pack up enough things to last you a week. I'll throw Parkman's junk together. (*He crosses to the trunk and starts packing the suitcase with some of the contents.*)

ROSALIE. You're not going to-night?

RIORDAN. (*Bending over the suitcase.*) You bet we are. We'll ride over to the Junction and wait for the train.

ROSALIE. No, no, Mike. I can't go unless it is absolutely necessary. You know I can't go. (*Slowly.*) I mean—I can't stand the trip.

RIORDAN. (*In a reassuring tone.*) Sure you can. You're lots better. Now, ain't you?

ROSALIE. Yes. I'm better. But if I overdid—it would put me back where I was. By the time I got to the border I'd be as bad as I was when we came down here.

RIORDAN. Well, maybe it's just as well to stand pat, after all— (*He throws a shirt into the suitcase.*)

ROSALIE. Poor Jim came down here, and got himself shot, so I'd get well—and the least I can do is to stay and finish the job.

RIORDAN. Sure, sure.

ROSALIE. (*Firmly.*) But, Mike. There's one thing I'm going to insist on. If you think it's time to move, you must take Parkman and go.

RIORDAN. Yeah. (*Bitterly.*) It'll look swell for us to blow and leave you here alone.

ROSALIE. There are no neighbors, so we don't care what they say. You're going because I insist on it. Get your things.

RIORDAN. (*Hesitating.*) No, it wouldn't be right.

ROSALIE. You left me alone when you went to New York last summer.

RIORDAN. Well, if you really want me to go——

ROSALIE. I do.

RIORDAN. Well, I suppose it is the sensible thing to do.

ROSALIE. Of course it is.

(RIORDAN *is greatly relieved. He begins to get his things together.*)

ROSALIE. (*Smiling with an effort.*) This will be a great shock to Mr. Parkman.

RIORDAN. (*Angrily.*) I ought to leave him here and let him get scared once, good and proper. I'd have stayed in the States and thrown this job in old Henderson's face if I'd known how much trouble it is to dry-nurse a President's son. If he is President Parkman's son his mother's folks must have been terrible. You know when you read about a guy like that you think he must be a hell of a fellow, but I give you my word that kid ain't any brighter than that cousin of mine who is always writing for money.

ROSALIE. (*Casually.*) He's all right.

RIORDAN. Let it go at that. God knows, they done some dumb things at the main office. But sendin' him here was the dumbest. I'm sick of answerin' questions.

ROSALIE. (*With mock earnestness.*) He wants to learn the business.

RIORDAN. (*Irritated.*) And I can't drive it through his nut that there ain't any business. Oh, well, it's all in a lifetime. I'll deliver him C. O. D. at Brownsville and make him a present of the freedom of the United States. Then, if I ever see him again, it won't be my fault. (*He grows more cheerful as he packs.*) Well, as the

preacher says, we're here to-day and in Hoboken to-morrow.

ROSALIE. You won't know what to do with yourself at home, Mike.

RIORDAN. (*With great good humor as he folds up a blanket.*) I won't? You watch me. I'm goin' to Brooklyn. My old man's joint is runnin' as a speak-easy. (*Proudly.*) Did I ever tell you my old man kep' a saloon? Every night there's a red hot game in the back room. And it's on the level. A stranger could go in there and win—if he held the cards. An' I got my cousin playin' on th' Brooklyn team, so I can get a pass. (*Reflectively.*) I think I'll get me a Ford coupé. You'd be surprised what you can do with a coupé in Brooklyn. And— (*RIORDAN stops talking as he sees PARKMAN enter.*)

PARKMAN. (*Bursting with news.*) Say. There's all kinds of excitement down in the village.

RIORDAN. What about?

PARKMAN. (*Hanging up his hat.*) They just heard there's been a big battle somewhere. Between the Federal troops and de Castro's men.

RIORDAN. (*Quickly.*) Who won?

PARKMAN. (*Smiling at the inefficient news service of an alien people.*) They don't know.

RIORDAN. (*Ignoring PARKMAN and speaking to ROSALIE.*) If the Federals won, they'd be braggin' about it— De Castro won.

PARKMAN. (*With sophomoric philosophy.*)

Think of a man like Mr. Henderson losing his investment because of these foolish political quarrels——

RIORDAN. (*Between his teeth.*) Listen. I want to tell you somethin'.

PARKMAN. (*Intent on the topic of his lecture.*) I've always believed in the rights of smaller nations. But this has opened my eyes. There's only one cure for a situation like this.

RIORDAN. (*Louder.*) Listen.

PARKMAN. (*Warming up to his subject.*) This country won't be fit to live in until we have intervention.

RIORDAN. (*Shouting.*) Hey. Wait a minute. (*More quietly.*) I beg your pardon, Mr. Parkman, but I'm trying to tell you that we got less than an hour to pack our stuff and get out.

PARKMAN. (*Amazed.*) Get out?

RIORDAN. When they begin shooting foreigners in this neighborhood, it's no time to be studying the mining business.

PARKMAN. Shoot us?

RIORDAN. (*Earnestly.*) I'm tellin' you. You just heard a battle has been fought. How old is that news? You don't know. Listen. The troops he licked in that battle went through the Junction. It's only two days' march up here from Marcia. If the Mexicans weren't so damn lazy they'd be here now.

PARKMAN. What if they were?

RIORDAN. We can be in Brownsville, Texas, in a week. And until de Castro is hung, Mexico's never, no more, forever, so far's I'm concerned. He's one bad hombre. De Castro ain't a General. He's a murderer. He's won two big victories and maybe three. He's headed this way. Come on, son. We got to get out.

PARKMAN. Who'd look after the horses and mules?

RIORDAN. We'll turn 'em out.

PARKMAN. Who'd run the mine pumps?

RIORDAN. Let 'em stop. It wouldn't be the first time the shaft's been flooded.

PARKMAN. (*Unconvinced.*) Well, I don't feel that it's right, to just desert the property.

RIORDAN. (*Angrily.*) Aw, shut up.

PARKMAN. (*Sharply.*) What's that?

ROSALIE. (*Trying to make him realize the situation.*) Mike thinks General de Castro may come any minute. Without warning.

PARKMAN. There's absolutely no reason to suppose that they'll molest us.

RIORDAN. (*In a sarcastic tone.*) Oh, no. Not us. They didn't molest those sixteen mining engineers. Just murdered them. They shot down Jane Ryan on her own ranch. And de Castro was the bird who killed Jim Kent. (FATHER ESTRELLA comes in as RIORDAN is talking to PARKMAN.) Will you go if Father Estrella advises it?

PARKMAN. It would all depend on what Father Estrella said.

ROSALIE. Any news, Father?

ESTRELLA. (*Putting his hand on ROSALIE's arm.*) Yes, I'm sorry. The worst possible news.

RIORDAN. Yeah?

PARKMAN. Is there anything definite?

ESTRELLA. Yes.

RIORDAN. I say we oughta get out, pronto. All three of us. But Mrs. Kent says she can't come. And Parkman says he won't go. He thinks I'm yellower'n a canary bird's tail.

ESTRELLA. No. No. No. You should all go. Immediately. The Federals have been driven back. Practically annihilated.

RIORDAN. There's no hope of catching a train north?

ESTRELLA. How can there be a train, when de Castro holds the railroad?

RIORDAN. They'll never stop him now. By God! He's boss of the ranch clear to Chihuahua. To hell with the train! I'm goin' to get a horse between my knees and give him the quirt.

ESTRELLA. Riordan is right. I feel that you people should act at once. There is nothing we can do.

PARKMAN. (*With an air of taking the whole situation in hand.*) I beg your pardon, Father, but there is something we can do. This attitude

of "God wills it" is something I can't understand. Why, you even let them take your church away from you and keep you from wearing your proper clothes. If the people realized what the conditions are—there'd be something done— I'm going to wire Mr. Henderson. Lay all the facts before him.

RIORDAN. How are you going to wire? (*To ROSALIE.*) Can't you drum it into his head? (*To PARKMAN.*) Didn't you hear me say that the telegraph wires are down? Don't you realize that the telegraph operator at the Junction has either skipped or joined de Castro? Why, for all you know, de Castro's men might be in the village this minute. Come to life. Let's get moving.

ESTRELLA. I feel Señor Riordan is right about this.

PARKMAN. Then I couldn't even telegraph, in case of emergency?

RIORDAN. Emergency? What do you think this is? No. You can take your choice between traveling on your own legs or a horse's.

ROSALIE. (*Patiently.*) Don't you see, Charles? Mike and Father Estrella understand this——

PARKMAN. (*To ESTRELLA.*) You're not leav-grub, money. That's all we can carry. Rosalie, come on. Take a chance. (*She shakes her head slowly, not trusting herself to speak.*)

ESTRELLA. Riordan, your best route is over the trail——

RIORDAN. Don't tell me, Father. I figured that out long ago. Up the canyon and straight north over the pass. Then three days in the desert—eight days to Chihuahua.

ROSALIE. (*To PARKMAN.*) Come on, be quick, Charles. Take the things you want most. I'll help you——

PARKMAN. (*Firmly.*) I haven't the slightest intention of going.

(*RIORDAN fills the canvas water bags from the earthenware jar in the corner.*)

RIORDAN. You sap.

PARKMAN. I suppose you understand, Rior-dan, that it will be necessary for me to report your desertion to Mr. Henderson.

(*RIORDAN grunts disdainfully. From the pegs by the door he takes saddle, bridle, blanket, and water bags, laying them over his arm. He leaves the saddle bags, his own blanket and his revolver on the table and goes out.*)

ESTRELLA. I do not wish you to feel I am over-presumptuous, Señor Parkman. But I believe that, if you were wise, you would accompany him.

PARKMAN. (*To ESTRELLA.*) You're not leaving, are you?

ESTRELLA. Perhaps I should do so, if it were possible. But our Bishop ordered us to remain

in our parishes. I am really forced to stay, do you see, like a soldier at his post.

PARKMAN. I see this as my duty, too. (*He adds politely.*) In quite a different way, of course.

ESTRELLA. If you feel it is your duty, I shall say no more.

(RIORDAN *enters. He rolls his sleeping-blanket, buckles on his revolver belt and picks up the saddle bags.*)

RIORDAN. Nobody comin'?

ROSALIE. It's no use, Mike. I can't and he won't. You're wasting time.

RIORDAN. (*Gathering up his things.*) I left you two water bags. In case you change your mind.

ROSALIE. You'd better hurry.

RIORDAN. (*To ROSALIE.*) If you say the word, I'll stay.

ROSALIE. (*Smiling with a great effort.*) That's all settled.

RIORDAN. If I did stay and they came, I couldn't help you. You know that.

ROSALIE. Of course you couldn't.

RIORDAN. You've not got me wrong about this?

ROSALIE. I understand perfectly.

PARKMAN. (*Sarcastically.*) Yes. We understand you perfectly, Riordan.

RIORDAN. (*Ignoring PARKMAN.*) Well, the best of luck and if I shouldn't—see you again——

ROSALIE. (*In a carefully casual tone.*) Forget it.

RIORDAN. Wish you'd try to come— (*She shakes her head.*) Well, good-bye. (*He shakes hands with ROSALIE and then with PARKMAN and ESTRELLA.*) So long, kid. Good-bye, Father.

ESTRELLA. God bless you.

(*RIORDAN goes out, swaggering a little.*

ESTRELLA follows him. ROSALIE rises and goes to the door, waving to hide her tears.)

(*PARKMAN sits thinking, somewhat shaken.*)

ROSALIE. Mike seemed in a hurry.

ESTRELLA. (*Stopping for a moment in the doorway.*) Good-day.

ROSALIE. Good-bye, Father.

ESTRELLA. I'm going to the village.

ROSALIE. Will you come back, later?

ESTRELLA. Yes. (*He hesitates.*) I would suggest, just as a precaution, you know, that you bury your valuables. (*He goes out.*)

PARKMAN. (*Nervously, after a pause.*) You know, this is a new experience for me. (*He is silent for a moment.*) I've never been anywhere, before, where one was so far away from the world.

ROSALIE. There's no one who could help much, if we did wire——

PARKMAN. Everything seems so far away. A desert island feeling. (*ROSALIE steps back from the door.*) I suppose I won't get any letter. I mean any mail. There must be something we can do.

ROSALIE. Sure.

PARKMAN. I keep wondering—what my father would have done, had he found himself in this situation. (*He is silent for a moment.*) Really, unless you knew him intimately, I suppose it's difficult to realize how wonderful he was. (*There is a pause. Then he speaks with more assurance as he takes up a familiar topic.*) I never met anybody who didn't love my father. They say he was the best-loved President of the United States since Lincoln. And I want to be like him—I'd like to do the right thing—(*with a touch of nervous querulousness*) if I could only find what the right thing is.

ROSALIE. To-night there were only two things possible for you to do. Go or stay. I advised you to go.

PARKMAN. I couldn't leave you here.

ROSALIE. Mike did.

PARKMAN. Well!!!

ROSALIE. Mike wasn't President Parkman's son, was he?

PARKMAN. (*Irritably.*) For God's sake. Please forget that.

ROSALIE. You introduced the subject.

PARKMAN. I thought, aside from my obligations to Mr. Henderson, it was only common decency for me to stay. Now, don't you think so?

ROSALIE. You want me to say, "My dear boy, I think you were very noble." But I won't. I think you were foolish. But let's hope I'm wrong.

PARKMAN. Are you honestly afraid of this de Castro?

ROSALIE. (*Slowly.*) Do you want the truth?

PARKMAN. Why, yes.

ROSALIE. (*Frankly.*) I'm scared to death.

PARKMAN. You needn't be afraid. I don't think de Castro will harm us.

ROSALIE. No?

PARKMAN. No. You see, several of my friends entertained General de Castro when he was in New York.

ROSALIE. What's that got to do with it?

PARKMAN. Why—uh—we must have mutual friends and—uh—if the worst comes to worst, I'd simply have to capitalize my friends' acquaintance with him.

ROSALIE. I can't imagine de Castro being a social success in New York. What was he doing up there, anyhow?

PARKMAN. Oh, just visiting around, I suppose. I guess he was something of a lady-killer up North—romantic figure—political exile and all that.

ROSALIE. No white woman would speak to him here, except at the point of a gun.

PARKMAN. (*Fussing over the ledgers on the table.*) Queer, isn't it? Lois seemed quite impressed by him.

ROSALIE. Lois?

PARKMAN. Lois Henderson. He was at her house for dinner.

ROSALIE. Honestly?

PARKMAN. What do you mean—honestly?

ROSALIE. Are you sure that Henderson actually had de Castro at his house?

PARKMAN. Of course I am. As a matter of fact, I almost ran into him myself.

ROSALIE. (*Deliberately casual.*) Well, isn't that odd? Where was that?

PARKMAN. In Mr. Henderson's office. The day I got this job. (*ROSALIE starts.*) Just my hard luck—I missed him by only a few minutes.

ROSALIE. (*After a pause.*) Listen, Charles. Doesn't that mean anything to you?

PARKMAN. How do you mean?

ROSALIE. Don't you know why de Castro was up there in New York?

PARKMAN. I'm telling you that——

ROSALIE. That's what he went up there for. He must have. He's been looking for a backer for years. He went up broke and came back rich—Henderson must have. It's incredible, but I don't think there's any doubt about it.

PARKMAN. (*Horried.*) You're charging him with hiring——

ROSALIE. He would. He'd hire someone to start a ruction down here. Make things so bad the United States would have to take a hand. They've actually done it in Nicaragua.

PARKMAN. I don't believe it.

ROSALIE. Charles, how did you happen to get this job?

PARKMAN. Why, I asked for it. That's all.

ROSALIE. Did they ask you to come to Mexico?

PARKMAN. I didn't quibble about where they'd send me. (*He puts the ledger away and lights a cigarette.*) I thought this would be interesting and a little adventurous down here.

ROSALIE. I'll tell you why I ask. There wasn't any job down here. They just put you on the salary list. I thought it was done as a favor to your family. But if Henderson knew this revolution was coming— Didn't they even warn you?

PARKMAN. Of course they did. They told me things had happened down here. I remember that sarcastic secretary of Mr. Henderson's saying, "After all, there wouldn't be any danger for you, because the bandits know that if they dared kill you the United States would have an army on its way in five minutes."

ROSALIE. My God.

PARKMAN. What's the matter?

ROSALIE. Henderson put you down here—I've heard things like that, but I didn't think they were true.

PARKMAN. (*Rising.*) You mean he——

ROSALIE. Say, if they get you, Henderson's got what he wants—what he'd work years for—spend a million dollars.

PARKMAN. But, my God, Rosalie——

ROSALIE. I tell you there isn't the slightest doubt. He threw it in your face. He sneered at you. You damn fool. Why didn't you tell me before? I'd have gone. I'd have taken that chance. Anything's better than this. Oh, to live in this hole for eight years—and then be— (*She shakes off her mood.*) Can't you see the headlines? "Ex-President's Son Murdered"—"Nation Demands War." Killing you will be just like blowing up the *Maine*.

PARKMAN. Rosalie— Now that we know— can't we do something?

ROSALIE. What?

PARKMAN. Couldn't we warn de Castro that he's been duped?

ROSALIE. He'd kill a man who brings him bad news.

PARKMAN. We could send a message to Washington.

ROSALIE. The telegraph isn't working.

PARKMAN. We could get word to Mexico City—the Federals would protect us to prevent war, wouldn't they?

ROSALIE. Hasn't de Castro ambushed the troops they sent——

PARKMAN. Well, then——

ROSALIE. (*Gently.*) You poor kid. They handed you a raw deal, didn't they?

PARKMAN. At least, I'm glad I know the truth——

(*ROSALIE gets a bottle of whiskey and pours two drinks.*)

ROSALIE. (*Drinking.*) Here's to truth.

PARKMAN. Suppose we went to de Castro voluntarily—told him about it—put ourselves under his protection—at his mercy? He wouldn't execute us for nothing, would he?

ROSALIE. Oh, no—he wouldn't. He'd play a little game with you. They call it the Law of the Fugitive. No. They'd take you prisoner—pretend you're trying to escape—then they'd shoot you. It isn't murder that way.

PARKMAN. Maybe it's not too late—I'm going to saddle the horses——

(*Shots are heard in the distance.*)

ROSALIE. They're in the village now.

PARKMAN. Come on, I'm going to take you out of here. Fill the water bags.

(*Voices are heard calling in Spanish.*)

ROSALIE. We can't get away, they're too close.

PARKMAN. Sure we can. We've got to. You don't want to stay here and get butchered.

ROSALIE. (*As she begins to pack up a few things.*) Get the horses. (*She starts to get the water bags ready.*)

(PARKMAN runs out. There is a noise at the window.)

ROSALIE. What are you doing?

MANUEL. (*Entering through the window.*) Just Manuel. That's all. Just Manuel.

ROSALIE. What do you want?

MANUEL. Yellow shoes. Señor Riordan promise when he go Manuel get yellow shoes.

ROSALIE. (*As voices are heard outside.*) Then why steal them?

MANUEL. Why not? Manuel must steal quick, before other soldiers steal them. They come now.

ROSALIE. It would have been nicer if you had asked for them.

MANUEL. I no ask—just take— To-morrow I be soldier too. You like that? Huh?

ROSALIE. Get out of here. Vaya.

MANUEL. (*As voices are heard again.*) You no boss now. Just gringo.

ROSALIE. Get out.

(MANUEL goes out. There is a pause, while ROSALIE still makes an attempt to get her things together. Then as the

voices sound nearer she drops the water bags with a gesture of despair.)

VOICE OUTSIDE. Entren—miren con cuidado —encuentren los hombres. (Inside you—look closely—find the men.)

(*A Mexican* LIEUTENANT *and soldiers enter.*)

LIEUTENANT. No toquen nada hasta que el General lo haya visto. (Touch nothing until the General has seen it.)

CAPTAIN. (*Entering.*) Pongan la guardia. (Post guards.)

(*The* LIEUTENANT *goes out. The voice of* ROJAS *is heard, then other voices.*)

CAPTAIN. You are Mrs. Kent. Two men live here. Well?

ROSALIE. Yes.

CAPTAIN. Where are they?

ROSALIE. They have gone.

(*Shots are heard.*)

CAPTAIN. Teniente. Este atento de ella. (Lieutenant. Watch her.)

(*The* LIEUTENANT *enters, sees the whiskey on the table.*)

LIEUTENANT. (*Lifting a glass.*) Vuestra salud. (Your health.) (*He drinks.*)

CAPTAIN'S VOICE. Ella esta aqui adentro, General. (She is in here, General.)

(GENERAL DE CASTRO *enters. He wears a*

soiled white uniform and a belt with a revolver and boots. His air of suave dignity has disappeared. He is brutally aggressive.)

GENERAL. Marche.

(The CAPTAIN and MANUEL follow the GENERAL in. MANUEL is currying favor.)

MANUEL. *(Excited, pointing to ROSALIE.)* Ella sabe donde esta el dinero. *(She knows where the money is kept.)*

GENERAL. *(To MANUEL.)* Quien es ella?
(Who is she?)

(The LIEUTENANT and soldiers go out.)

ROSALIE. Yo soy la Señora Kent. *(I am Mrs. Kent.)*

GENERAL. *(In a matter-of-fact tone.)* Oh, yes. *(To the CAPTAIN.)* Busque a Rojas. *(Find Rojas.)* *(When the CAPTAIN has gone he speaks sharply to ROSALIE.)* Why are you here? You belong here, eh?

MANUEL. Ella es— *(She is——)*

GENERAL. *(Roaring at MANUEL.)* Callese muchacho. *(Shut up.)*

ROSALIE. I am the bookkeeper.

GENERAL. Oh, yes. Good. You have money, too, eh?

ROSALIE. What money?

GENERAL. Come on. Where is it? What you care? It is not your money.

ROSALIE. (*Half amused.*) I should say not.

GENERAL. Sure. What you care for the damn company? Where you hide it?

ROSALIE. I don't know what you're talking about.

MANUEL. Ella lo ha escondido en la caja, yo lo vi. (*She has hidden it in the box. I saw it.*)

ROSALIE. (*Smiling.*) Oh. He means the silver for the men. (*She gets the money from the trunk.*)

GENERAL. Where's the rest of it?

ROSALIE. That's all.

GENERAL. Si. (*He counts the money and then turns angrily to MANUEL.*) Dijiste que habia mucho dinero. (*You said there was much money.*)

MANUEL. (*Pointing to it.*) Si. Si. Mucho dinero. (*Yes. Yes. Much money.*)

ROSALIE. Yes, General, that is his idea of a lot of money.

GENERAL. Mentecato. Eres un mentiroso. (*You fool, you lied to me.*) (*The GENERAL starts to draw his pistol, and MANUEL, very frightened, breaks into a flood of Spanish and runs out of the door.*)

GENERAL. You are sure that was all?

ROSALIE. Yes, General. Mexican high finance.

GENERAL. You are like the rest of the damn Yankees—try to be smart, eh?

(*ROJAS enters and salutes the GENERAL.*)

ROJAS. Era el muchacho joven que estaba an

la establo ensillando dos caballos. (It was the young man. He was in the stable, saddling two horses.)

GENERAL. Speak English. Tell her how you shot the Yankee.

ROJAS. Most unfortunate—yes—he saddle two horse. When I come he try to run away. So I shoot quick. To-morrow, we find body.

GENERAL. Esta bien. Marchese. (All right. Get out.) (ROJAS *leaves*. The GENERAL *turns to ROSALIE*.) So your friend tried to run away, eh? What the devil you come here for anyhow? Too damn many Yankees here. You sure there is no more money than this?

ROSALIE. Quite sure.

GENERAL. (*Seizing her arm, hurting her*.) Don't lie. My men will search careful and if they find more——

ROSALIE. You will shoot me like you shot my husband?

GENERAL. Oh, he was your husband? (*Meaning PARKMAN*.)

ROSALIE. No, it was two years ago, on the road to Marcia——

GENERAL. Serve him right. He was a damn fool to come here——

ROJAS. (*Calling from outside*.) General.

GENERAL. Si?

ROJAS. (*Entering, dragging FATHER Es-*

ESTRELLA.) El padre. Estaba escondido. (The priest. He was hiding.)

GENERAL. Estan las copas sagradas en la iglesia? (Are the Holy Vessels in the church?)

ROJAS. No. Estan escondido. (No. They are hidden.)

GENERAL. (*To ESTRELLA.*) Dame los y seras libre. (Turn them over and you may go free.)

ESTRELLA. No son mias para dar. (They are not mine to give away.)

GENERAL. Well, lady, you hear? Another fool. If he does not show me where he has hid his damn——

ROSALIE. (*Pleading with ESTRELLA.*) Father, please. Be sensible. You'll have to give them up.

ESTRELLA. No.

GENERAL. She gives you good advice, Padre, listen to her. (*To ROSALIE.*) He will be wiser before I am through with him. (*To ESTRELLA.*) I have a Captain with long spurs. (*ROJAS laughs.*) Yesterday, in Capalio, he rode priest-back from the fountain to the church before the padre could remember where he bury the Chalice. His spurs are sharp, Padre.

ESTRELLA. Esta bien. (So be it.)

GENERAL. Idiota. (Idiot.) (*To ROJAS in Spanish.*) Busque el Capitan. (Call the Captain.) (*ROJAS goes out.*)

ROSALIE. (*Greatly distressed.*) Father, he means it. For God's sake, give them up.

(ESTRELLA turns toward ROSALIE.)

GENERAL. (*With a flash of real patriotism.*) See, now, the two of you together, the priest and the Yankee, Mexico's leeches. One trying to help the other.

ESTRELLA. (*To ROSALIE.*) You see, (*scornfully*) he calls himself the Liberator.

GENERAL. And what you call me? (*Menacingly.*)

ESTRELLA. I call you the Cut-Throat.

(*The GENERAL draws his revolver, flips it about his forefinger and hits ESTRELLA on the head. ESTRELLA collapses.*)

ROSALIE. Did Henderson hire you to do that?

GENERAL. What?

ROSALIE. (*After a pause.*) Didn't he pay you all he owed you in New York? Or did he send you here to collect it?

GENERAL. What you mean?

ROSALIE. Surely, you've not forgotten we're both employed by the same company?

GENERAL. Where did you hear——

ROSALIE. I'm Henderson's bookkeeper, you're his hired man——

GENERAL. Who say that?

ROSALIE. Tell me, General. Did he hire you as a peon, just by the day? Or did he give you a contract like a white employee?

GENERAL. Take care what you say.

ROSALIE. Suppose we write a joint letter to Mr. Henderson and ask him to raise our salaries. Think of all we've done for the Spread Eagle Company. The one thing that worries me, General, is what your men will say. They've joined the army of the Liberator. But when they find that the province they have conquered is to be turned over to Martin Henderson——

GENERAL. That's a lie——

ROSALIE. Your men won't like it.

GENERAL. (*Slowly.*) They will never hear it. (DE CASTRO looks at her steadily for a moment, then walks to the door and calls.) Rojas—Rojas!

ROJAS' VOICE. Si?

GENERAL. Esta mujer es una espia. Foremen la esquadra. (This woman is a spy. Make up a firing squad.)

ROJAS' VOICE. Si.

(FATHER ESTRELLA has been lying motionless on the floor. Now he begins to stir.)

GENERAL. So. You see. You are to die.

ROSALIE. (*Tries to speak, swallows hard, manages to articulate one word.*) Yes?

GENERAL. You do not like to die?

ROSALIE. (*Speaking with difficulty.*) Are you really interested?

GENERAL. Unfortunately, you have too long a tongue. Let them blindfold you good. It is not so hard if you do not see the guns.

ROSALIE. I can look at them.

GENERAL. As you wish—you are tired of living?

ROSALIE. (*Her voice rising dangerously near hysteria.*) No. I prefer to live— (*She gets control of herself again. After a moment she lights a cigarette, holding up the match so that he can see her fingers are steady.*) General, will you permit a question?

GENERAL. Well?

ROSALIE. Have you ever run away from an American army?

(*There are calls in Spanish outside.*)

GENERAL. Now what do you mean by that?

(*There are sounds of shouts and marching.*)

ROSALIE. When you know the answer you'll be closer to death than I am now. (*She smiles at him.*)

GENERAL. Rojas. Bueno—tomela— (*Take her.*)

(*ROJAS and the soldiers come in.*)

ROJAS. We are ready.

ESTRELLA. (*Standing with difficulty and holding out the crucifix.*) General. Allow her to say a prayer.

GENERAL. Marchese. (*Go on.*)

ROSALIE. (*In a firm voice.*) Good-bye, Father. (*With great precision, ROSALIE puts out her*

cigarette by crushing the glowing end. The soldiers place themselves on either side of her. ROSALIE, ROJAS, and the soldiers go out. GENERAL DE CASTRO looks thoughtfully after them for a few moments and then follows.)

ESTRELLA. (*Kneeling.*) Jesu, Jesu, Jesu. In manus tuas, Domine, commende spiritus meum. Domine Jesu Christe, suscipe spiritum meum. Sancta Maria. (*He is saying the prayer for the dying.*)

ROJAS' VOICE. Alto. (Halt.)

ESTRELLA. —ora pro me. Maria, mater gratiæ.

ROJAS' VOICE. Preparen. (Make ready.)—
(*There is a rattle of muskets.*)

ESTRELLA. —mater misericordiæ tu me ab hoste protege,

ROJAS' VOICE. Apunten— (Aim)——
(*There is a sobbing scream from ROSALIE as she sees the rifles pointed at her.*)

ESTRELLA. —et hora mortis suscipe.

ROJAS' VOICE. Fuego! (Fire!)
(*There is the sound of a scattering volley.*)

ESTRELLA. —Amen.

CURTAIN.

The house is blacked out.

SCENE 2

A Broadway Theatre. Two weeks later. The footlights are put on. The orchestra swings off into Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries." The music is halted by the THEATRE MANAGER, who walks out. The music ends in a sudden discord. THE MANAGER. "Ladies and Gentlemen: I have been asked to read this announcement. 'All officers and enlisted men of the United States Navy and Marine Corps; all officers and enlisted men of the United States Army; all reserve officers and enlisted men of the organized reserve; all officers and enlisted men of the National Guard and Naval Militia are hereby directed to report to or communicate with their headquarters or commanding officers immediately. By executive proclamation.'

"Of course the telephones in the box office at the front of the theatre are available to any man who wishes to report by phone. I will not attempt to comment upon this order which I just read. But I wish to say for all of us as you men leave the theatre—Boys, our hearts are too full for utterance this evening. We can only say, we wish you the best of luck. And tell you that we, as individuals, are behind you, just as this whole country is behind you."

(He walks off.)

The house is blacked out.

SCENE 3

The broadcasting station WPIX. Later the same night. It is a small bare room. In the center of it is the "mike." A man is talking into the "mike." He is reading from yellow, newspaper copy sheets in his hand. His voice is perfectly clear because the "mike" is actually connected to a loud speaker. THE MAN. "To-day's markets were sensational. Coppers and steels reached new highs, in one instance topping the mark set in 1917. . . ." (The door is opened. Enter the ANNOUNCER, carrying a telegram.) "Bear operators were driven from the scene. . . ." (The ANNOUNCER glances at the telegram, then waves the speaker from the "mike.") The ANNOUNCER, facing the audience and into "mike." "Folks, this is JACK ALBERT, announcer of WPIX. I've interrupted Mr. FELIX BRADY, News Editor of the *Evening Clarion*, who was reading the late news and market reports. I've interrupted him, Ladies and Gentlemen, to give you an announcement you'll never forget, and never want to forget. Folks, it's been only two weeks since CHARLIE PARKMAN was murdered, but the sentiment of this country has galvanized Congress into action. . . .

"Folks, this is the telegram from Washington.

"Listen, folks. This is a joint resolution of the Senate and the House . . . passed without a dissenting vote."

(He reads:)

"Whereas, the recent acts of the de facto government of Mexico are acts of war against the government and people of the United States; **RESOLVED:** by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled; that the state of war . . . ?"

(The noise outside reaches a crescendo.)

"Folks, they've heard it in the street outside, and they're making so much noise I can't hear myself. . . . 'And **RESOLVED:** that the President be and hereby is authorized and directed to take immediate steps not only to put the country in a state of defense but also to exert all of his power and employ all of our resources to carry on a war against the de facto government of Mexico and to bring the conflict to a successful termination.'"

"Folks, I tell you this country is never going to forget CHARLIE PARKMAN, our White House Baby. We'll never forget how he was murdered by those bandits down south of the Rio Grande.

"Although CHARLIE PARKMAN had to be martyred to make us realize it, we're going to make Mexico safe for every American citizen.

"This is WPIX, JACK ALBERT announcing. . . ."

CURTAIN.

The house is blacked out.

SCENE 4

A Motion Picture Theatre. Six weeks later.

As the radio scene ends and the house is blacked out, the orchestra swings off into a jazz number. A motion picture screen is lowered and on it appears the title "News of the Week."

The orchestra changes into "Hail Columbia" and the words appear "SIX WEEKS OF WAR—SHOW UNCLE SAM WAS PREPARED."

An animated cartoon follows, which shows Uncle Sam, with pack and gun, blowing a call to arms in Maine and then marching across the states to Texas, at the head of a mighty army that springs from the soil as he passes.

The next title, "OUR FLEET PATROLS THE GULF—SOMEWHERE OFF NEW ORLEANS (First Official Pictures of Our Fleet in Action)," precedes a flash of a line of battleships and destroyers firing at an unseen enemy. The orchestra plays "Sailing."

The music changes to the "Funeral March," and the title flashes "NATION MOURNS—MARTYRED SON OF OUR BELOVED PRES-

IDENT." The picture is of a crêpe and flag-draped portrait of CHARLES PARKMAN.

Then comes the title, "VICTORY STREET—NEW YORK NATIONAL GUARD UNITS ORDERED TO BORDER PARADE DOWN FIFTH AVENUE." The orchestra plays "Under the Double Eagle" march. The film shows a mammoth parade of infantrymen and the entrainment of the regiments in the Pennsylvania Station.

"THEY ARRIVE AT THE BORDER—ASKING—'WHEN DO WE EAT?'" is the next title, with pictures of them detraining and falling into mess lines. The accompaniment for this in the music is the Army adaptation of "The Song of the Vagabonds," known as "Slum and Gravy."

"THESE FIGHT" is a flash of a battle scene, with an infantry skirmish line under fire, and "WHILE THESE PREPARE" shows rookies drilling in the training camps to the tune of "You're in The Army Now."

"WALL STREET MAGNATE GOES TO WORK FOR UNCLE SAM"—accompanied by the "Sambre et Meuse" march—is the introduction to a scene in which MARTIN HENDERSON receives an official commission from the government. "MARTIN HENDERSON ACCEPTS DOLLAR-A-YEAR JOB AS CHAIRMAN OF

THE NATIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL."

HENDERSON is shown glancing out of his office window down on Wall Street.

"OFF TO INSPECT ARMY BASE AT MATAMORAS, MEXICO." HENDERSON and JOE are shown boarding a private car. The orchestra plays "Yankee Doodle," which changes into "Dixie" as a fluttering, ragged United States flag appears on the screen.

The house is blacked out. The orchestra continues playing "Dixie" in the darkness.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III

ACT III

The interior of MARTIN HENDERSON's private car, which is standing on a railroad siding at Matamoras, Mexico.

While the theatre is darkened, at the end of the news reel, the orchestra continues playing "Dixie." One becomes aware of the shuffling of many feet, an army marching. The music ceases but the sound of marching feet continues and increases in volume. There is also the sound of an officer's whistle, hoarse commands, and of a sergeant counting, "Hutt-two. Hutt-two. Hutt-two."

The lights come up, showing the interior of the private car which HENDERSON and JOE were seen to board in the cinema weekly. On the left of the stage is the corridor that leads from the observation section of the car to the staterooms. On the right is the rear door of the car and the observation platform. Built in, by the corridor door, is a buffet from which the car porter serves the meals. A thermos jug and a basket of fruit stand on it. A collapsible table is fastened between the next two windows. The other furnishings include very comfortable leather-upholstered chairs and a couch.

As the curtain rises a SENTRY is lounging against the observation platform door. He is a Southern boy, in the ill-fitting issue uniform of a private of infantry. He wears a cartridge belt.

Through the car windows one may see lines of freight and passenger cars on adjoining tracks. From these detraining yards, throughout the act, comes the sound of moving trains, trucks, marching, and working men. Overhead is the constant hum of planes.

The SENTRY in the doorway snaps to attention, salutes, and walks across the car to the corridor.

SENTRY. (*Calling.*) Mr. Henderson?

HENDERSON'S VOICE. (*From his stateroom.*)
Yes.

SENTRY. General Wagner, sir.

HENDERSON'S VOICE. Ask him to come in.

VOICE. Hey you, York, pick up that shovel, take the lead out of your shoe. Come on, you guys.

SENTRY. Yes, sir.

(*He crosses the stage, throws open the door, and stands rigidly at salute. HENDERSON enters, wearing a tropical weight suit, his hands full of legal papers. BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAGNER comes in, He is a dapper, slightly bald, profes-*

sional officer, who reminds one of the more offensive type of Y. M. C. A. secretary.)

WAGNER. (*Greeting HENDERSON with marked deference.*) Welcome to Mexico, Mr. Henderson.

HENDERSON. (*Hospitably.*) Well, General. Glad to see you. (*They shake hands. A train whistle is heard.*) The Secretary of War told me I'd find you in charge here.

WAGNER. We're going to put on quite a show for you.

HENDERSON. Have a chair.

WAGNER. (*Sitting down.*) Beautiful weather, isn't it? (*Glancing out of the window.*) It's hard to believe that it's mid-winter up North.

HENDERSON. So even war has its compensations, eh?

WAGNER. (*Solemnly.*) Well, it's duty and that's enough. But I must say things have turned out very nicely. I'd expected to go to Florida on three months' leave, but this will be a very acceptable substitute.

(*There is the sound of a train pulling in.*)

HENDERSON. Another troop train?

WAGNER. Yes, sir. (*Looking at his wrist watch.*) That should be either the hundred and fourth or the hundred and fifth Field Artillery. That is, if my schedule has been carried out. However, it's one thing for an R. T. O. (railroad

transportation officer) to make a schedule and quite another thing to find subordinates who can move on it.

HENDERSON. I hope you realize there has been a great deal of praise for the manner in which you have handled the mobilization.

WAGNER. (*Willing to accept the entire credit.*) I guess this is an answer to Colonel Mitchell's fault-finding. Now, sir, I'm working on a report to you and the other members of the National Defense Council. It will show that this was the fastest mobilization in history.

HENDERSON. (*Rising and going to sideboard, where he lights a cigar.*) Will you have a cigar, General?

(*A train whistle is heard.*)

WAGNER. (*Looking at the sideboard.*) No, thank you, sir. But I wonder if I might beg one of those beautiful apples.

HENDERSON. Why, certainly.

(*WAGNER rises and brings a plate, apple, fruit-knife, napkin, and finger-bowl from the sideboard. He tucks his napkin in the front of his tunic, pares, quarters, and eats the apple.*)

WAGNER. (*Between bites.*) I find that nothing keeps me in better trim than apples.

HENDERSON. Having any trouble with the civilian population?

WAGNER. Oh, no, sir. No, indeed. They're used to Americans. For the past seven years, you know, tourists have been coming over here from the States. To get drunk, you know. So they were very calm about the soldiers. (*He munches the apple.*) But if there should be any friction or trouble, it won't matter in the least. We won't have any damage suits brought against us by civilians here. They can't since they're enemies. (*Reflectively.*) It's a good thing for the men, too. It peps them up to realize they're in conquered territory.

(*JOE enters from the corridor. He is nervous, sneering, and ill-at-ease.*)

HENDERSON. Why, yes. So it would— Oh, Mr. Cobb—General Wagner.

JOE. (*Not shaking hands.*) I see it's a real war. They're unloading a hospital train over there.

HENDERSON. (*Shocked.*) What? Are we really losing many men?

WAGNER. Oh, except for sickness, it's been a picnic so far.

JOE. Sure.

WAGNER. The greasers won't stand up and fight. They slip down to the trails and pick off a man here and there.

JOE. (*With a sneer.*) A few Americans used that trick at Lexington and Concord——

WAGNER. It's a good thing. It takes a few casualties to put a fighting edge on men, you know. (*He finishes his apple and looks longingly at another.*)

HENDERSON. (*Gravely.*) General, I understand about the sniping casualties. That can't be avoided, I suppose. But I don't understand why, with our medical service, we should have losses from sickness. I consider a death from disease an absolute blot on the Army's record.

(*The noise of an airplane is heard distinctly.*)

JOE. (*Bitterly.*) You'd understand if you'd ever been to an Army doctor.

WAGNER. (*Smiling at JOE.*) There may be quite a bit of truth in that, Mr. Cobb. (*JOE throws himself down in his chair. WAGNER turns to HENDERSON.*) You see, the change of climate, diet, and of water is sure to affect the men. But it's better training for them than summer maneuvers. Hasn't it been magnificent, the way the country has reacted? I wouldn't have believed that the murder of anyone, not even the murder of young Parkman, could have stirred us to war so quickly. Well, I suppose he bore one of our sacred names. We're so proud of those names: Washington, Lincoln, Parkman, Roosevelt. Harm a man with a name like that and there's something in the heart of every American that says

"Fight." (*He gestures with his fruit knife. HENDERSON coughs uneasily. JOE drums a tattoo with his fingers on the chair back.*) We all know that intervention had to come, sometime, anyway. But in avenging young Parkman's murder, a great many of our citizens will feel that, at last, the country is finding its soul.

HENDERSON. (*Solemnly.*) I think that's true, and, well, we all have to die sometime.

JOE. Yes, and not all of us can start an avalanche by dying, either.

(*HENDERSON gives him a quick look.*)

WAGNER. (*Placidly.*) Precisely the word, Mr. Cobb. Any good war is like an avalanche.

HENDERSON. (*Looking sharply at JOE again.*) As I was saying, I've been deeply affected——

WAGNER. I understand perfectly. Young Parkman was your employee.

HENDERSON. He was employed by one of the corporations in which I happen to be interested.

WAGNER. But, in a measure, you feel responsible——

JOE. (*Looking HENDERSON straight in the eye.*) Exactly.

HENDERSON. (*Rising to end an interview that has proven very disagreeable to him.*) I can't speak officially on this subject. But, after all, I don't need to tell you—(*with evident emotion*) the nation will applaud the troops who surround

young Parkman's (*harshly*) murderer. Who bring him back, dead or alive— (*He drinks a glass of water at the buffet.*)

JOE. Yes, indeed.

WAGNER. We all understand that, Mr. Henderson. There's no doubt we'll eventually get de Castro. After the thing he did, I don't believe the troops will ever deliver him up for trial. Why, they'll shoot him on sight. And they should. Now, Mr. Henderson, if there's any service I can render you, while you're here, don't fail to call on me.

HENDERSON. (*Without shaking hands.*) Certainly, General. Thank you.

WAGNER. Good day.

(*He goes out. The SENTRY opens the door and salutes.*)

(*A voice outside is heard shouting, "No smoking in ranks. Throw out that butt. Stick in your chin."* HENDERSON and JOE, both angry, are silent until the door is closed.)

HENDERSON. Joe. (*He pauses while he considers what he is about to say.*) It's time you and I had a little talk——

JOE. Want to fire me?

HENDERSON. I don't understand you, Joe. If there's something on your mind——

JOE. You know damn well there's something on my mind.

HENDERSON. What?

JOE. What the hell? It's on your mind, too. What's the use of kidding yourself?

HENDERSON. (*Careful not to be offended.*) I'm sure I don't know what you're talking about.

JOE. (*Harshly.*) Parkman.

HENDERSON. As a matter of fact, you're wrong. I wasn't thinking of—(*he hesitates*) Mr. Parkman.

JOE. No?

HENDERSON. No. I was thinking about you, Joe.

JOE. Well, I was thinkin' of Parkman, see? I was thinkin' that, if I ever (*raising his voice*) killed another man, I'd do it myself. In daylight.

HENDERSON. I'm glad you said that, Joe. Now I understand you.

JOE. Oh, Christ. If he'd been my own size, if he'd fought back. It's such a cheap damn business to kill a fool who doesn't know any more than to let you kill him. (*He pauses, half-frightened by his own words.*)

HENDERSON. (*Quietly.*) Yes, Joe. I see what you mean. I'd rather have you say it than think it.

JOE. Listen. If I'd killed somebody like you, I'd never give it another thought. But if I did it, I'd have to be smarter'n you. Wouldn't I? But that poor dub. After he met us what chance

did he have? We told it to him to his face and he wouldn't listen.

HENDERSON. Yes, Joe. We told him.

JOE. You don't realize what it means to kill a man. You never saw a man get killed. I have. Standing next to a guy once when he got shot. You could hear the bullets hit the body. Yes, sir. It was in a crap game, and besides the report of the pistol you could hear (*slaps his right fist into the palm of his left hand*). We knew we were takin' a chance when we went into the place. And Charlie Parkman never— (*His voice trails off.*)

HENDERSON. (*With a real admiration in his tone.*) Joe, whatever you may think of me, I'll say this to you. You're the most honest man I've ever known. And one of the bravest. It took courage for you to say that to me.

JOE. Don't you ever think about it?

HENDERSON. Yes.

JOE. Remember? That day after he'd gone? I—I—I laughed at him.

HENDERSON. It's been worrying you, because you laughed.

JOE. A lot of things have been worrying me. A lot of things. This whole damn business. Getting on my nerves. The damn generals and you with this act of yours, this patriotism——

HENDERSON. Well, it's a compromise that has to be made. Sometimes, the end does justify the

means, that's all. Take Lincoln. He's our national saint, and he should be. But he was a practical man, too. Didn't he make a political deal with old Cameron of Pennsylvania? Didn't he make old Cameron Secretary of War, when he knew Cameron was looking after the contractors instead of the soldiers? Lincoln knew that by using Cameron for the moment he could save the country in the end.

JOE. Well, it gets my goat. You come to war in your private car, you bring your family, you feed apples to the generals. Why did you bring Lois? Can't you see what it does to her?

HENDERSON. She seems unhappy, Joe.

JOE. (*Bluntly.*) Don't you know what's wrong with her?

HENDERSON. No. (*He pauses.*) It worries me.

JOE. She was in love with Parkman.

HENDERSON. What?

JOE. I'm telling you.

HENDERSON. I don't believe it.

JOE. You must know.

HENDERSON. It's impossible. It can't be true. I won't have it true.

JOE. Who's practical now?

HENDERSON. Did she tell you she loved him?

JOE. Is that the kind of thing anyone tells?

HENDERSON. Then you're crazy.

JOE. All right. I'm crazy.

HENDERSON. Joe, for God's sake, why didn't you tell me before, before it was——

JOE. I didn't know it. That is, until the day Parkman—well, the day the news broke.

HENDERSON. I must do something for her——

JOE. (*Bitterly.*) Tell her to look at it—in terms of a hundred years from now.

HENDERSON. Joe. (*He walks over and puts his hand on JOE's shoulder.*) Joe. Don't talk to me like that.

JOE. (*Shaking off the hand.*) We both wanted to be nice to Lois. So we killed the boy she loved.

HENDERSON. (*Attempting an alibi for them both.*) We didn't know she loved him—(*with a sudden suspicion*) unless (*pause*) Joe—did you do it deliberately?

JOE. (*Furious.*) Now. Get this straight. If I'd known Lois wanted him, I would have seen you and the Pan American and the Spread Eagle all in hell first. See?

HENDERSON. Why?

JOE. (*Throwing himself into a chair.*) That's none of your damned business.

HENDERSON. I'll make you Vice-President of the P. A. S. You'll take a six months' leave of absence. Travel. Get this out of your system. When you come back there will be a seat for you—on the Board of Directors.

JOE. Well. (*He hesitates.*) I suppose I ought to thank you and—I do.

HENDERSON. There, Joe, there. We might as well face things frankly——

LOIS. (*Coming in from the observation platform.*) Hello——

(JOE and HENDERSON start and move away from each other.)

HENDERSON. (*Jokingly.*) I was going to send out a tracer for you.

LOIS. I was watching the troop trains come in.

HENDERSON. Really, Lois, I don't think you ought to go out like this, without an escort.

LOIS. You and Joe were both busy.

HENDERSON. Make Joe go with you next time.

LOIS. (*To JOE.*) I never realized before how big war is.

JOE. Big? I'll say it is. It's so damned big you can't measure it.

HENDERSON. Excuse me for a few minutes and I'll be ready to take a walk with you. (*He gathers up some papers and goes out.*)

LOIS. All the soldiers are so young.

JOE. They'll look older coming back.

LOIS. Thousands of them. They act as if they'd never been away from home before.

JOE. You ought to go through the stock-yards. Lots of sheep there that were never away from home before either. (*Outside there is the*

sound of a sergeant's whistle.) There's the shepherd calling.

LOIS. You musn't call them sheep, Joe. Why, they're having the time of their lives. They're doing something for their country, something very unselfish.

JOE. Yeah. I felt like that myself, once.

LOIS. I didn't know you ever felt at all.

JOE. No?

LOIS. No. In fact, I've been a bit afraid of you lately. It seemed to me you were growing so hard that you clanked inside.

JOE. Yeah?

LOIS. Of course, I realize that it's probably I who have changed. You see, I'm really the one who's to blame——

JOE. For what?

LOIS. (*Looking out of the window.*) Charles Parkman.

JOE. (*After looking at her a moment in silence.*) That's a damn fool thing to say.

LOIS. Yes, I am. You don't know how he——well, the reason why he wanted to take a job so far away.

JOE. No.

LOIS. It was my fault. You see, I told him he wasn't experienced, hadn't accomplished anything, I mean——

JOE. What's that got to do with it?

LOIS. Oh, I know you never liked him, but after he'd gone—we used to write and, well, I realized that I—missed him very much. I mean I kept thinking he'd gone there because of me. You see—I am responsible.

JOE. (*Firmly.*) You weren't responsible, not at all. So don't worry about that.

LOIS. I was. I sent him away.

JOE. In two minutes I can prove to you that you were no more responsible for what happened to young Parkman than you are for the man who jumped off the Washington Monument. I happen to know, see?

HENDERSON. (*Entering and going toward the observation platform.*) Get your hat, Joe. We'll take a look around.

LOIS. Yes. Come on, Joe. I'll show you where they unload the guns. (*In a low tone.*) You think it might have happened, anyway, even if I hadn't——

JOE. (*Harshly.*) Yes.

HENDERSON. (*Coming back.*) Get your hat, Joe.

JOE. I'm not going.

HENDERSON. I wish you'd come.

JOE. I've seen it all before.

LOIS. You'll be here when we come back?

(*JOE nods. HENDERSON and LOIS go out, the SENTRY opening and closing the*

door. JOE *fidgets about the room. He picks up a book, throws it down, bites into a pear and puts it down uneaten. Then he sees that the SENTRY is watching him.*)

JOE. (*Calling.*) Say, soldier. Oh, soldier. Come in here.

SENTRY. Did you call me, sir?

JOE. Take off your belt and sit down.

SENTRY. (*Virtuously.*) I don't dare do that, sir.

JOE. As you were, guy. As you were.

SENTRY. (*Startled.*) What?

JOE. Give yourself "At Ease."

SENTRY. (*Quite at ease.*) Aw. You done a hitch yourself, eh, mister?

JOE. You tell 'em.

SENTRY. Well, you ain't missin' much this time.

JOE. Naw. I know that. But it makes me nervous.

SENTRY. Got a butt? (*Seating himself comfortably.*)

JOE. (*Tossing over a package of cigarettes.*) Keep 'em. Say. I been wonderin'. What's all those funny-lookin' trucks for, over by the Ordnance Repair Shop. You know, look like old limbered-wagon-caissons, except they're motor-drawn.

SENTRY. Huh? Oh. That's the flame and gas service. Chemical warfare. Didn't you ever see that stuff before?

JOE. No.

SENTRY. Them little whosits are flame projectors. You should see them boys drill. Didn't they have nothin' like that when you was in the army?

JOE. I never saw 'em.

SENTRY. What branch was you in?

JOE. I was a gallopin' Corporal of a machine-gun outfit in the Forty-second Division. What're these birds I see around with "T" on their shoulders?

SENTRY. Tank Corps.

JOE. They ain't chasin' the Mexicans with tanks, are they?

SENTRY. Naw. All the Tanks Corps does is dig latrines.

JOE. This is all news to me. Is all the artillery motorized? I miss the horses.

SENTRY. Yeah. Most everything rolls on gas instead of oats now.

JOE. What happened to the stable sergeants?

SENTRY. I heard they made dentists outa them. Oh, well. They say that other was a pretty good war.

JOE. Who was tellin' you that? How're they treatin' you this time?

SENTRY. Well, we ain't eatin' so good. If the mess sergeants didn't steal half the grub to sell to the greasers we'd feed better. An' half the rollin' kitchens ain't come yet, an' half the cooks is good taxi drivers. We got paid yesterday, though. So most of us is eatin' in restaurants. Lots of the boys has got the dysentery.

JOE. If you go on sick call for it, I suppose the boiler-makers give you CC pills and iodine.

SENTRY. Naw. They changed that. They're givin' us castor oil an' Christian Science. Say, this funny Mexican liquor ain't so bad after you get used to it, and there's a pack of hot tamale mamas in this town.

JOE. There always is. Any other amusements?

SENTRY. Eight of us done some extra drill in the Last Chance saloon last night. (*Hitching forward in his chair and speaking confidentially.*) You see, it was this way. We got in the back door an' there was a crap game goin'. I was fadin' a greaseball from the hundred an' third machine-guns an' some big buck from Arkansas pulls a razor.

(*WAGNER'S voice is heard calling angrily outside.*) Sentry. Sentry.

SENTRY. My God! (*He rushes to the door.*)

WAGNER'S VOICE. Sentry.

SENTRY. (*Saluting.*) Yes, sir.

WAGNER'S VOICE. Where's Mr. Henderson?

JOE. Yes, General. Mr. Henderson just left.
What is it?

(WAGNER enters.)

WAGNER. (*To the SENTRY.*) Find Mr. Henderson. Tell him he's needed here at once. (*The SENTRY goes out. WAGNER turns to JOE.*) We've found young Parkman.

JOE. You have?

WAGNER. Just got word. Wonderful, isn't it?

JOE. (*With an effort.*) You mean, you've found his body?

WAGNER. No. Found him. He wasn't murdered. He was wounded and crawled away. Our patrols picked him up.

JOE. (*Moistening his lips with the tip of his tongue.*) Excuse me, General. What did you say?

WAGNER. I said our patrols had found young Parkman. Most astounding thing in the world. It's incredible what that boy went through, and yet he's alive.

JOE. Alive?

WAGNER. But in a very curious state of mind. I must see Mr. Henderson immediately.

JOE. Then we went to war on a false report?

WAGNER. (*Waving the remark aside.*) Oh, that's water over the dam now. Besides, the woman was killed, right enough.

(*The SENTRY enters, holding the door open.*)

SENTRY. Mr. Henderson, sir.

(HENDERSON *comes in. Voices are heard outside.*)

HENDERSON. What's the matter, General?

JOE. (*Quickly.*) Nothing's the matter. There's great news. Parkman's been found.

HENDERSON. Yes?

JOE. You don't understand. (*Coming close to him and speaking very slowly and distinctly.*) He wasn't killed. Only wounded. He wandered towards the border and our troops picked him up. Don't you get it? He's still living.

HENDERSON. (*Without conviction.*) Thank God.

WAGNER. But I'm sorry to say the poor boy— (*He taps his forehead.*) Well, it's been too much for him. I fear he's a little unbalanced.

HENDERSON. Unbalanced?

JOE. How? What do you mean? What?

WAGNER. The poor fellow insists upon seeing Mr. Henderson. He's talking wildly. It's all jumbled in his mind. He seems to have confused you—(*turning to HENDERSON*) with General de Castro.

HENDERSON. He does?

JOE. (*Anxiously.*) Where is he now?

WAGNER. Over at my Headquarters. The out-

post that picked him up sent him here by ambulance plane. I came ahead to tell you while the Post Surgeon was looking at his wound.

(There is noise outside. They glance out of the window. HENDERSON and JOE look meaningly at each other.)

SENTRY. *(Opening door.)* Take it easy, boy. Take it easy. So! You're Parkman!

(PARKMAN stumbles in between two Medical Corps Sergeants.)

JOE. Here he is now.

GENERAL. Yes, Mr. Henderson is here.

HENDERSON. My boy.

PARKMAN. *(Snarling.)* You are glad to see me back, aren't you?

HENDERSON. Of course I am. My boy, we are proud of you. You are a true Parkman.

PARKMAN. *(Almost screaming.)* Don't touch me, you murderer! *(PARKMAN's clothing is torn and soiled. His shoes have been replaced by Mexican grass sandals. His shirt is open and one sees that his shoulder is freshly bandaged.)*

(HENDERSON steps forward and tries to take his hand.)

WAGNER. *(Speaking to PARKMAN with a sick-room manner.)* Now, now, my boy. This is Mr. Henderson.

PARKMAN. I know him. The dirty murderer! *(To HENDERSON.)* You thought I was done for,

eh? But I'm back. I'm back. See! Here I am!

HENDERSON. (*Shaking his head and turning to JOE.*) Too bad. Too bad——

PARKMAN. Yes. You bet it's too bad.

HENDERSON. Perhaps, General, if we had him alone——

WAGNER. Certainly.

(WAGNER motions off the SENTRY and the Medical Corps Sergeants. They salute.)

PARKMAN. (*Quickly.*) No. Stay here. I want witnesses to what I'm going to say——

WAGNER. (*Ignoring PARKMAN.*) Of course. I think you're right, Mr. Henderson.

(*The SENTRY and the Sergeants go out and WAGNER starts toward the door.*)

PARKMAN. (*Wildly.*) Come back here. (*To WAGNER.*) I'm not crazy. You got to listen to me. I'm saner than you——

WAGNER. (*Soothingly.*) Of course, my boy. Mr. Henderson will have you home in a week. You can forget all about this business.

HENDERSON. (*To WAGNER.*) I've heard of these cases before.

WAGNER. If you want anything, I'll be at my Headquarters. (*He goes out.*)

PARKMAN. (*Suddenly.*) Have you bought the Generals in both armies?

JOE. (*In a sarcastic tone as he lights a cigarette.*) That wasn't necessary.

HENDERSON. (*Reprovingly.*) No, Charles. That remark wasn't necessary at all.

PARKMAN. Every day for six weeks I've been thinking what I'd say to you. And now I'm here——

HENDERSON. (*Going toward him.*) My boy, you're not feeling well.

PARKMAN. (*Almost screaming.*) Keep away from me! (*More calmly.*) No. I'm not feeling well. But I'm not dead. They shot me, all right, just as you planned——

HENDERSON. (*Sharply.*) Be careful.

PARKMAN. You'd better listen to me.

JOE. (*Quietly to HENDERSON.*) Find out what he's got to say.

PARKMAN. Your murderers shot me. But they didn't finish their job. They didn't follow the thing up. Better cut their salaries. They shot me. The priest showed me how I could find my way north alone. I had to walk all night, every night. Have you ever been thirsty or hungry?

JOE. Yes. I have. What of it?

PARKMAN. (*Taking no notice of JOE.*) But I didn't care. I was coming back to see you, face to face. And now——

HENDERSON. Well?

PARKMAN. Three days ago I found out that Rosalie had been right. That you had tricked the Government into going to war. It's too bad that I came back, isn't it?

JOE. Why?

PARKMAN. There won't be any war now.

JOE. You flatter yourself.

HENDERSON. This has been coming for a long time. We'll never turn back now.

PARKMAN. You tried to murder me and failed. I come back here and you say it doesn't make any difference. The war is going on just the same. You don't care how many soldiers are killed to make Mexico safe for the Spread Eagle Mining Company. (*Raising his voice.*) But it will make a difference where I'm going now. I'm not going to your hand-picked generals. I'm going back home to the people. They'll believe me. They don't like murder and they don't like treason. I'll tell them how you hired General de Castro to start the Revolution. (*Turning to JOE.*) How I was shot. How Mrs. Kent was butchered in cold blood. They'll believe me. They'll know I'm telling the truth. They'll know you for a murderer, a traitor, a conspirator against the Government of the United States. They'll forget Benedict Arnold when they think of you.

JOE. (*Slowly.*) You won't tell anything. (*His plan has evidently been made.*)

PARKMAN. Won't I, though?

JOE. No.

PARKMAN. (*With relish.*) And the things they'll do to you. Why, the people will lynch

you when they hear it. You'll never be tried, in court. They'll hang you from the first tree——

JOE. (*Quietly.*) Just a moment. (*He motions HENDERSON to be quiet and speaks to PARKMAN in an impressively casual tone.*) I think I can save you from getting yourself into a lot of trouble.

PARKMAN. I'm not the one that's in trouble now. My troubles are over.

JOE. Then, evidently, you haven't thought this out much better than you thought out that trip down into Mexico.

PARKMAN. What are you talking about——

JOE. (*Opening the door to the observation platform.*) Sentry!

SENTRY. Yes, sir.

JOE. Go over to Press Headquarters. Find Bill Davis. Tell him Joe Cobb wants him.

SENTRY. Yes, sir. (*He goes out.*)

JOE. (*Walking back.*) You're a whining—yellow—belly-aching coward. Listen. If you'll play ball with us, we'll be good fellows and give you a nice coat of whitewash.

PARKMAN. You'll whitewash me?

JOE. Yes, we'll do that for you, in spite of the way you've acted.

PARKMAN. Do you believe you can make me think you're right and I'm wrong?

JOE. That's the way it is. But I'll give out

your interviews and there won't be a breath of scandal.

PARKMAN. Scandal? About whom?

JOE. About yourself. Here you want to go to the newspapers with your story—to newspapers that Mr. Henderson's friends control. (*Sharply.*) And what do you suppose the newspapers will say about you? (*He pauses and then adds tauntingly.*) There were two of you left at the mine—you and a woman—and here you are. There were two of you down there and you let the woman face the firing squad. There were two of you, and when the bandits came, where were you? Saddling up a horse to come north—alone. (*Slowly.*) You know, Parkman, your father would have disowned you for that.

HENDERSON. (*With renewed hope.*) True.

JOE. (*Hammering away at PARKMAN.*) You can't lie about it. As you said, the people will know when you're telling the truth. You can't tell a good enough lie to get out of this. Your friends, the American people, will forgive anything in a Parkman, except a yellow streak——

PARKMAN. You——

JOE. Wait a minute——

PARKMAN. (*Aghast.*) Go ahead. Say the worst things you can.

JOE. I won't have to say the worst things. I won't exert myself. In ten minutes I'll have a newspaper correspondent here. I can put a story

on the wire: "PARKMAN FLED AS GIRL WAS SHOT." But I won't. No. I'm too clever for that. When I talk to Bill Davis I'll defend you. I'll make it look as if Mr. Henderson and I were trying to cover up your cowardice.

PARKMAN. (*Starting toward Joe.*) You God-damned——

JOE. It's up to you what story I tell Davis.

(*Suddenly realizing the situation, PARKMAN collapses in a chair.*)

HENDERSON. Give him a glass of water, Joe. I guess the poor fellow has fainted.

(*With unsuspected tenderness, JOE brings a glass of water from the sideboard and offers it to PARKMAN.*)

JOE. I didn't want to be so rough with you—I'm sorry for you, kid. On the level, I am. But we're all in the same boat and we got to stick together.

(*PARKMAN sobs.*)

HENDERSON. He's all right now, Joe.

JOE. (*To PARKMAN.*) I give you my word, kid. You'll feel a lot better after a while.

HENDERSON. (*With immense relief.*) And I won't forget this, Joe!

JOE. Don't you wish you could?

PARKMAN. Oh, God. (*He sits crumpled up in the chair. A train pulls in nearby. He rises and walks to the window.*)

HENDERSON. That's all right, Charles. Take

it easy. It will take you some time to get the practical point of view. Then everything will seem all right.

(There is the sound of marching feet, then the command, "Close up those ranks. Cover in file.")

PARKMAN. (*Dully.*) I guess it's gone too far for anyone to stop.

JOE. Yes. Much too far.

HENDERSON. Of course it has, son. You might have made a lot of trouble for me and for yourself. You'll understand when you're older. This whole thing was coming, bound to come. It was just a question of what started it.

SENTRY. (*Entering.*) Here's Mr. Davis, sir.

(DAVIS hurries in, wearing civilian clothes and a "W. C." arm band.)

JOE. Come in, Bill.

DAVIS. Joe, unless it's something awfully important, I'd like to see you later.

JOE. Wait a minute, Bill.

DAVIS. I'm busier'n a bartender. There's a rumor that the troops found young Parkman alive. My paper's queryin' me and this boy scout Wagner won't tell us anything——

JOE. How'd you like to have me confirm that rumor?

DAVIS. What?

JOE. In fact, I'll do better than that. Mr. Parkman, this is my friend, Bill Davis.

DAVIS. My God. (*Walking toward PARKMAN.*) You're honest-to-God here. (*To JOE.*) Did they release him or did he escape?

JOE. (*Interposing between DAVIS and PARKMAN.*) Listen, Bill. I told you if there was ever a break, I'd give it to you, didn't I?

DAVIS. You certainly did.

JOE. Then let me do it my own way.

DAVIS. Anything you say.

JOE. Mr. Parkman has just come through one hell of an experience. He's close to a collapse. I don't want him badgered by a lot of you news hounds——

DAVIS. I understand. Gimme the story and I'll keep off the other dogs.

JOE. That's fine. Suppose we all sit down. Pardon. Mr. Henderson, Mr. Davis.

(*They bow and make a circle of their chairs. JOE dominates the group.*)

DAVIS. (*To PARKMAN.*) How are you? Now, if you'll just slip me the bare facts, I'll give it to the rest of the crowd.

JOE. What do you want first?

DAVIS. (*Promptly.*) How bad are you hit, Mr. Parkman?

JOE. (*Interrupting.*) As a matter of fact,

Bill, the surgeon says he's suffering more from shock and exposure than from the wound——

DAVIS. Mighty glad to hear it's no worse. Now, if you could tell me, you know, just the main facts——

JOE. Don't make him repeat it, Bill. I'll tell you as he explained it to us and he can—(*with a sharp glance of warning at PARKMAN*) correct me if I'm wrong.

DAVIS. Joe, this is damn good of you.

JOE. Charles was out, away from the mine, looking over some property——

DAVIS. Sure. I see.

JOE. About fifteen miles away, wasn't it, Charles? Well, call it fifteen miles. He was up there, when he heard of the approach of the rebels. I believe it was a servant who told him.

HENDERSON. Don't forget to tell Mr. Davis how the priest helped Charles.

JOE. I'm coming to that. As soon as Charles heard of de Castro's approach——

DAVIS. Pardon me. Then the report was right? It was de Castro's men who did it?

JOE. (*To PARKMAN.*) Are you certain it was de Castro's army?

PARKMAN. (*Flinching.*) Yes——

JOE. (*Cutting in.*) As soon as he heard of the advance, Charles realized that he and Mrs. Kent were in danger——

PARKMAN. Yes, but——

JOE. (*Interrupting again.*) The natural thing for Charles to do was to start north, Bill. He was north of the mine. If he went back to help Mrs. Kent, he had every reason to believe that he would meet up with——

PARKMAN. Please let me——

JOE. (*With a sharp glance that silences PARKMAN.*) He had to make the choice between safety for himself and a bare chance of aiding this woman. (*There is a pause.*) Knowing Charlie Parkman as I do, I don't believe it took him very long—to make up his mind——

(PARKMAN buries his face in his hands.)

DAVIS. Well, see here, Mr. Parkman. Don't let it worry you. I'm sure it wasn't possible for you to do more than you did——

JOE. (*Seeing PARKMAN's surrender.*) He started right back toward the mine. He was going to warn Mrs. Kent. And he might have reached there in time to save her life, except that he lost his way.

DAVIS. God, what a story.

JOE. Isn't it? (*Resuming.*) As he rode up to the property, they were getting ready to execute her. Some of the bandits saw him and shot him. He fell from his horse. That's right, isn't it, Charles? (PARKMAN nods dully.) There was a priest there who helped him start north. He trav-

eled at night, finding his way by the stars. Do you think of anything more I should say?

PARKMAN. (*Groaning.*) No, I guess that's enough.

HENDERSON. You should tell Mr. Davis——
(*LOIS enters.*)

LOIS. Charles! (*She runs to him and kneels beside his chair.*) Dearest. Look at me! Charles, dear. Sweetheart. Please.

PARKMAN. (*His face averted.*) God! (*To JOE.*) I can't stand this——

LOIS. Dearest. You don't know what you're saying—— Why, Charles, dear. Can't you see? Honey, it's all right now. (*She bursts into tears.*)

HENDERSON. (*Quietly.*) He's only been here a few minutes, Lois.

LOIS. Why did you keep me waiting, even for a minute?

(*As they kiss, HENDERSON walks nervously to the window. DAVIS, very much embarrassed, goes to the door.*)

DAVIS. Well, Joe, thanks a lot. I'll be movin'.

JOE. Wait. (*DAVIS starts to go out.*) Wait! I got some more news for you. (*He goes toward LOIS and starts to put his hand on her shoulder. Then he stops.*) You'll want some things for Charles to wear. There are a lot of clothes in my stateroom. Take anything you want. (*To PARKMAN.*) You'll feel more like a hero, I expect, when you've had a chance to shave and dress——

HENDERSON. Joe. Where are you going?

JOE. (*Sharply, as he picks up his hat.*) For some fresh air. I'll be back in a little while. (*To DAVIS.*) How do you like this war, anyway?

DAVIS. It's lousy.

(*DAVIS laughs and he goes out with JOE.*)

LOIS. (*Kneeling.*) You're back. That's all I care. Don't talk about anything else. Oh, Charles! You don't realize what it means to have you again.

HENDERSON. (*Distressed and impotent.*) I'll see if I can find some of Joe's things for Mr. Parkman. I guess between us Joe and I can fit him out. He can use the other stateroom. (*He goes out.*)

PARKMAN. Lois!

LOIS. I love you so.

PARKMAN. You mean it?

LOIS. I've hated myself for letting you go. Now you're back. It's like a miracle.

PARKMAN. Oh, Lois, I don't care what I've been through, if it's made you feel this way.

LOIS. (*Kissing him.*) I'm so happy. Tell me, dear. You're not badly wounded?

PARKMAN. No. No. I'm all right.

LOIS. If you feel like it, we'll go to the Matamoras Hotel for a duck dinner with the General. Do you want to?

PARKMAN. I want to do anything you want me to.

LOIS. I've so much to tell you, Charles. That day we got the word—then I realized—oh, everything. There was nothing I could do— There was so much about you in the newspapers——

PARKMAN. (*Distressed.*) Please, dear.

LOIS. They have pictures of you everywhere. Some of them framed in black——

PARKMAN. Don't talk about me. Talk about you.

LOIS. (*More cheerful.*) All right. The club's been done over and redecorated— Oh, you remember Louis, the head-waiter?

PARKMAN. Yes.

LOIS. He's enlisted.

PARKMAN. I feel as if I'd gotten him into trouble.

LOIS. But it isn't trouble. Everybody's in the army now. Even father's bootlegger went. I wanted to drive an ambulance. Everybody's getting a thrill out of giving something. Isn't it wonderful? And you— (*She pats his shoulders.*) Why, General Wagner says you're as famous as your father now.

PARKMAN. Famous?

LOIS. Yes.

PARKMAN. Maybe that's the way they get famous.

LOIS. I know what the soldiers say about you. They think you're the gamest man who ever lived.

HENDERSON. (*Entering.*) I think, Charles—that you'll find everything you need in the state-room. It's the second one. And between Joe and me, there's something for you to wear in there.

(*Lois smiles.*)

PARKMAN. Yes. Thank you.

HENDERSON. And if you don't find anything you want, I——

LOIS. Father, we're all going to be so happy now.

HENDERSON. What!

PARKMAN. I suppose I ought to tell you. Lois and I love each other. And we're planning on being married.

HENDERSON. Suppose we don't any of us decide anything so important as that until we get back in New York to a normal atmosphere——

PARKMAN. Lois and I have decided.

LOIS. Father doesn't understand— Why, I've kept Charles waiting a whole year——

HENDERSON. Just a moment. This is something that ought to be thought about. You are both young.

PARKMAN. (*Catching HENDERSON's eye.*) Is there anything about me that you object to?

HENDERSON. I'd rather talk about it later.

PARKMAN. (*Firmly.*) If you're going to talk,

let's talk now. We both have a good deal we might say.

LOIS. (*Wheedling him into reluctant consent.*) What else is there to say, except that you love me and you're going to love Charles and you're glad we're so happy?

HENDERSON. Naturally, I want you to be happy.

SENTRY. (*At the door.*) General Wagner, sir.

(WAGNER comes in.)

LOIS. (*Leading PARKMAN.*) Come on——

(LOIS and PARKMAN go out toward the staterooms.)

WAGNER. How is he?

HENDERSON. (*Fearfully shaken by Lois' engagement.*) He seems much better now, thank you.

WAGNER. I felt sure that once he was with friends——

HENDERSON (*Impatiently.*) Yes. Yes. Poor boy. Just a temporary thing . . .

WAGNER. May I be of any service?

HENDERSON. No. Not now. Later we might have a talk.

WAGNER. (*Pausing at the door.*) Would you mind telling Miss Henderson that, if she'd like to see the formation at Headquarters, we'll be starting directly.

HENDERSON. I will. Thank you. I will.

(WAGNER goes out.)

(HENDERSON *seats himself at his desk. He attempts to look at the documents laid out there; then, with a burst of anger, he takes one of the briefs in his hands and tears it into a thousand scraps. The papers litter the floor.*)

(*Voices are heard outside shouting, "Column right! March! 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4. Squads right! March! Company 1-2-3-4. Halt!" There is a rattle of muskets.*)

(HENDERSON *buries his face in his hands. He does not look up.*)

SENTRY'S VOICE. You can't come in here.

JOE'S VOICE. Who in hell says I can't?

(*A bugle in the distance blows "First Call."*)

SENTRY. (*Opening the door.*) I didn't know you, soldier.

(JOE *enters. He is in the misfit uniform of an infantry private. He dumps an armful of civilian clothes down on a chair.*)

HENDERSON. (*Looking up.*) Joe!

JOE. Yeah?

HENDERSON. What've you done?

JOE. Just got a new suit. I'm going on the road for you.

HENDERSON. (*Walking over to him.*) En-listed? Are you crazy?

(*Another bugle blows "First Call."*)

JOE. See! They're fallin' out for retreat.

HENDERSON. Joe. What made you do it?

JOE. (*Turning.*) Oh! (*Very confidentially.*) I'll tell you. They had a band.

HENDERSON. You've done a lot for me. Do you think I'll let you go off half-cocked like this?

(*The bugles blow "Assembly."*)

JOE. You mean you want me to do a lot more?

HENDERSON. You know better than to do a thing like this. Why should you carry a rifle alongside a bunch of wops and hunkies? You'll be just another one. Unskilled labor. Take off those dirty clothes. I'll have the General tear up your enlistment papers.

(*Voices outside are shouting: "Batteries report: 'A' Battery present, 'B' Battery present or accounted for, 'C' Battery present."*)

JOE. (*Pointing.*) I think that's my outfit lining up over there.

HENDERSON. Joe. You can't leave me now.

JOE. No?

HENDERSON. No. I've got Parkman on my hands——

JOE. You might have had a rope around your neck. I broke that kid to save you; but when I had him down in that chair scaring the nerve out of him I knew damn well I was doing my last job for you, so—get rid of him yourself.

(*The bugle blows "Attention."*)

HENDERSON. Lois says she'll marry him.

JOE. Why not?

HENDERSON. You don't understand. It must be stopped. I can't have him around me, living with me, the rest of my life.

VOICE OUTSIDE. Batteries, attention!

JOE. All right. Put him out.

HENDERSON. (*Querulously.*) They want to be married right away. How can we stop it?

VOICE OUTSIDE. Parade rest.

(*The bugles blow "Retreat."*)

JOE. It looks to me as if you'd have quite a job figuring that out.

HENDERSON. I'd have to see Parkman every day——

JOE. He'll have to see you. Think of the bright side of it.

HENDERSON. (*After a pause.*) Joe. It drives me wild to see them together.

JOE. (*In a cold rage.*) What about me? Do you think I like to see 'em together any better'n you do? What the hell have you got to whine about? Isn't he a hero? Doesn't she love him?

HENDERSON. (*Frightened at JOE's outburst.*) Joe! You can't be serious, Joe, enlisting. This is one of your jokes.

JOE. Sure. A little joke on myself. Laugh at it.

HENDERSON. (*With a gleam of low cunning.*) You may be killed.

JOE. (*Simply and seriously.*) Getting killed doesn't worry me. It's the walking and the dysentery.

HENDERSON. All right then, Joe. If you're determined, have sense about it. Let me get you a commission. Make it anything you like up to major. I'll have it for you in twenty-four hours.

JOE. (*Looking at his uniform.*) No. I'd rather have this. I got it myself.

HENDERSON. I don't know how I'll get along without you, Joe.

JOE. Pack your own load for a change.

(*The bugles finish blowing "Retreat."*)

HENDERSON. Why, damn it. I'd never have started this thing if I'd known it would take you away. (*He slumps into a chair.*)

VOICE OUTSIDE. Battalion, attention.

JOE. (*Walking to window and turning.*) You didn't start it. I began it with a wise crack. You followed it up. I've hated your guts ever since.

VOICE OUTSIDE. Present arms.

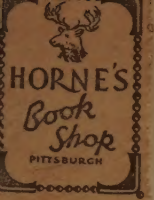
(JOE *stands at the window, watching the parade ground and half-facing the audience. There is the dull boom of the sunset gun in the distance. A band bursts into the opening bar of the "Star-Spangled Banner."* JOE *comes to a rigid salute, then notices that HENDERSON is slumped down in his chair, looking ten years older.*)

JOE. (*Out of the corner of his mouth.*) You son-of-a-bitch. Stand up.

(HENDERSON *rises with difficulty.*)

(*The band plays on.*)

CURTAIN.



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